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Research Monograph No. 9

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1995
| CONTENTS |
|-------------------|---|
| Acknowledgments | iv |
| Indigenous Australians in the economy 1993–94: An introduction | v |
| **Abstracts of research** | 1 |
| Purchasing outlets | 213 |
| Key word index | 217 |
| Geographic index | 221 |
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of people assisted in the production of this monograph. We would like especially to thank Professor Altman for his advice and support throughout the compilation of the bibliography. We are also grateful to him for writing the Introduction which provides an overall analysis of the 1993–94 research covered in this volume, discusses developing research needs, and considers policy implications arising from the research output.

Thanks are also due to Jerry Schwab for helpful comments on the manuscript, to Gillian Cosgrove and Belinda Lim for sub-editing assistance, and Joy Humphreys for layout and proofreading assistance in the final days. Finally we acknowledge the academics of the Centre for Aboriginal Policy Research, whose research forms a significant proportion of the content of the bibliography, for their support.

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December 1995
This monograph, authored by Linda Roach and Hilary Bek, provides abstracts of a selection of research published during 1993 and 1994 on economic issues that affect indigenous Australians. In choosing entries for inclusion, the authors focused on research publications that were both publicly available and policy relevant, with an emphasis on issues related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development and labour force status.

This monograph is the third in a series compiled by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), The Australian National University (ANU). The first, Aborigines in the Economy: A Select Annotated Bibliography of Policy-Relevant Research 1985–90 (Allen, Altman and Owen 1991) was undertaken as a consultancy for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). The second Indigenous Australians in the Economy: Abstracts of Research 1991–92 (Roach and Probst 1993) was undertaken as a specific CAEPR project. The main objectives of these earlier monographs were:

i to provide a means to assess the extent of published research relevant to the Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP);

ii to provide an up-to-date information base to assist ATSIC to make rational decisions in the allocation of research funds; and

iii to highlight specific areas that require additional research.

Indigenous Australians in the Economy: Abstracts of Research, 1993–94 provides an opportunity to update the earlier monographs, focusing primarily on the first two principal aims above. Initially it was intended to publish bibliographic updates of Aborigines in the Economy annually, but it was subsequently decided to undertake this task on a biennial basis, to allow for greater accumulation of research output and the production of a more substantial monograph. ATSIC is increasingly commissioning research of importance to economic policy and program evaluation, and updating the earlier studies will assist in identifying additional research requirements and in providing an information base for those engaged in research. This additional update provides an opportunity to assess whether research is being undertaken in previously neglected areas and to highlight new research priorities. The task of compiling bibliographic databases is specifically referred to in the ANU's funding agreement with ATSIC.
Policy context

The first select annotated bibliography Aborigines in the Economy focused on objectives specified by ATSIC. The key policy focus of the first study was the AEDP, as defined in the Aboriginal Employment Development Policy Statement of 1987 (Australian Government 1987). As CAEPR-initiated studies, Indigenous Australians in the Economy: Abstracts of Research 1991–92 and Indigenous Australians in the Economy: Abstracts of Research 1993–94 have been more widely constituted to include abstracts of research that extend beyond the strict boundaries of the AEDP. In particular, this latest study records a large number of publications influenced by recent developments such as the High Court’s Mabo judgment of 1992 and the passage of the Native Title Act 1993 and implementation of recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Commonwealth of Australia 1991).

Aims and audiences

As noted in the introduction to Aborigines in the Economy definitions of the ‘economy’ and ‘economic development’ are complex, and contested, and there is no clear boundary between the economy and other aspects of social, cultural and political life (Allen et al. 1991: ix). This is particularly the case in the wake of the Mabo High Court decision where ‘economic’, ‘political’ and ‘legal’ issues are closely intertwined. It is recognised that there is an element of subjectivity in the items chosen for inclusion. This is especially so with some publications in the native title area: owing to rapid changes in implementation of the High Court judgment, some items published in 1993 are already very dated and inaccurate and have been excluded. Others have been included because they are pertinent if not current.

Despite this proviso, a conscious effort has been made to be inclusive, rather than exclusive, in the choice of published material of economic policy relevance for annotation. The three studies in the series (CAEPR Monographs 1, 4 and 9), now covering the period 1985–94, provide similar information on availability, key words, geographic area of research and key cross-references, as well as subject and geographic indexes. Together the bibliographies form a valuable unbroken data base of research spanning the past decade.

The target audience of this volume is wide and includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, bureaucrats and policy makers, academics and consultant researchers, students, and others, such as media interests, seeking information on the contemporary economic situation of indigenous Australians. It is intended that this study, which briefly summarises research findings and provides subject and geographic indexes, will be of assistance in information dissemination.
While the very detailed abstracts in this monograph can be used without reference to original sources, the study's primary intention is to direct readers to relevant available research in the subject areas.

Sources of information

This bibliography focuses on published and readily available research. Most entries were located in libraries or were found as references in published material and then purchased. Obviously, the authors cannot guarantee that all items that have been published are covered, but they have attempted to be comprehensive. The items summarised fall into three categories: books and monographs (or relevant parts thereof), published government or research reports (or relevant parts thereof), and articles published in academic journals. Unpublished and confidential research has not been included, as such material would be out of place in what is a research directory.

There are other sources of information on indigenous Australians in the economy that are publicly available, which are not included in this monograph. These include annual reports of government departments and statutory agencies; publicly-available submissions to government inquiries; and program evaluation reports produced by government agencies like ATSIC's Office of Evaluation and Audit or the Australian National Audit Office.

Statistical analysis of contents

As in the earlier studies, a synoptic database of the 170 items included in this monograph was set up using Microsoft Excel. The database included information on research authorship, year of publication, broad and narrow geographic focus of research, primary and secondary research subject areas and sponsors of research.

Authorship and output

There are problems associated with attribution of authorship, especially with those government publications that did not specify authorship. In establishing the database, no distinction was made between authors of books and articles, and sole authorship was not distinguished from co-authorship. No abstracts of edited volumes as a whole appear in this study, the focus being on specific chapters.

Overall, the 170 entries had 89 identified authors or co-authors with authorship of the remaining 35 items being institutional. There were only 22 individuals who had more than one entry in the bibliography, suggesting that there is still only a small pool of specialists researching this area.

Researchers were mainly male and non-Aboriginal: of the 89
identified authors, 34 were female, and 13 were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.

Entries in the bibliography indicate that research output was higher in 1993 (89 items) than in 1994 (81 items); both years indicate higher output than in 1991 (70 items) or in 1992 (52 items). However, given that the particular study period is only two years realistically no trends can be discerned although it should be noted that 1993 was the United Nations International Year of the World’s Indigenous People and some institutions did specifically target publication output to that year. It is interesting to note though that annual output in 1993 and 1994 was higher than in 1991 and 1992 (when a similar selection process was used) and even higher than for each of the five previous years (1985–90), although, as noted earlier, the last two bibliographies are more inclusive than the first study.

**Subject coverage**

An analysis of subject coverage by primary and secondary focus indicates that some topics have been well researched, while others are relatively neglected. The largest proportion of studies focused on land rights, native title and land management (27), government policy and programs (18), economic status (14) and employment and income issues (13). Other areas that were relatively well researched included statistics and statistical requirements (10), regional and community planning (9), self-management and self-government (8), tourism (8) and housing (8). As a secondary focus, government policy and programs (37), land rights, native title and land management (24) and statistics and statistical requirements (23) stood out. Employment and income issues (10), self-management and self-government (5) and population were also significant secondary topics.

**Geographic coverage**

Assessing geographic coverage of research is complicated, primarily because geographic areas covered by research are often imprecise. A distinction was made between large geographic jurisdictions (especially States and Territories) and specific regions and places. Even this distinction is complicated. For example, given the significance of issues in the Torres Strait, this region was defined as a large geographic jurisdiction. On the other hand, some researchers undertook multi-region studies.

Most entries (105) were based on Australia-wide research. Fifty-three studies focused on specific States or Territories and 9 on the Torres Strait. Specific focus on States/Territories indicates that the Northern Territory is most popular (22 specific studies), followed by Queensland (8), Western Australia (7) and South Australia (3). However, a number of Australia-wide studies included information on all States and Territories, or provided information that could be applied in a regional context. The regional jurisdiction, ATSIC regions, established by the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989*, was the subject of very few published studies (4). The exceptions were the Torres Strait (partly because
the region correlates closely with the ATSIC Region, since 1994, the Torres Strait Regional Authority), the Kimberley region (5 studies) and Cape York Peninsula (3 specific studies).

Sponsors of research
To unambiguously define the sponsors of research is also a complex task. This applies especially to research output from CAEPR, which is primarily funded by ATSIC, but which also receives financial support from the ANU and the Department of Social Security. A large number of studies in this bibliography were undertaken at the instigation of government agencies. However, only a small number of agencies were actually directly involved in undertaking research. These included primarily ATSIC (12) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (6), but also the Australian Housing Research Council, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), the Australian Science and Technology Council, the Central Land Council, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET), the Department of Tourism, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), the Institute of Aboriginal Development and the Resource Assessment Commission (RAC). Some of these organisations, such as AIATSIS, CSIRO, GBRMPA and RAC, have statutory research functions. An interesting development is the active role that agencies are playing, not just in commissioning research, but also in publishing it.

The majority of research, though, still originates in the university sector: of the 170 entries, 48 were sponsored by CAEPR and 21 by the North Australia Research Unit (NARU) both parts of the ANU. Three other studies originated elsewhere in the ANU. Only eight entries were sponsored by other universities, indicating that the ANU had a near monopoly on university-based research on the economic situation of indigenous Australians (as defined in this bibliography). It remains unclear why so few others are researching in this area. As noted in the previous monograph, the focus of CAEPR on economic policy issues affecting indigenous Australians is hardly surprising given that the Centre was established specifically to undertake such research. But it should also be said that CAEPR was established to supplement, rather than supplant, research effort in this broad area.

Some previously identified needs and research output
The two earlier studies highlighted a number of broad areas that required further research. There is no ready means to match research demand and supply, except via tightly-defined consultancies most of which would not appear in this bibliography anyway because they are unpublished. It is,
however, instructive to examine the extent to which previously identified needs have been met, given the above mentioned qualification that published research can have a lead time which can extend well beyond the two-year time frame of this analysis. A correlation was undertaken by roughly matching the geographic coverage and subject areas in the database for this project with a number of the areas previously identified for further research. This analysis demonstrates that there has been growth in some areas identified for further research, but less in others.

The need for better information
The need for better socioeconomic information on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations remains an important priority which has been addressed to some extent by the conduct of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS) in 1994. Unfortunately data analysis lead times mean that the first major publication from this research was only published by ABS this year (ABS 1995), with a number of other publications planned for 1996. These include a major report on employment outcomes currently being undertaken jointly by ABS and CAEPR as a specific consultancy for ATSIC.

A key issue identified by a number of researchers is the need for a multi-faceted approach to data collection that not only relies on NATSIS, but also on the greater use of identifiers and supplementary census questions targeted at issues of special significance to indigenous Australians (Altman 1992). Unfortunately, while an identifier has been incorporated on the monthly Labour Force Survey for one month each year (in 1994 and 1995), no data from these have as yet been made publicly available.

In the previous bibliography, it was suggested (Altman 1993: x–xi) that the availability of 1991 Census data will see a spate of publications analysing intercensal change in indigenous economic status between 1986 and 1991. In fact, this has eventuated, partly driven by the mid-term review of the AEDP undertaken by ATSIC. In 1993, Dr John Taylor from CAEPR was commissioned to produce reports to inform the AEDP review; not only have these two reports been published as CAEPR monographs (see Taylor 1993b and 1993c), but a spate of CAEPR Discussion Papers by Taylor (1993d, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c) and Taylor and Roach (1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1994d, 1994e) analyse these changes at the State and Territory levels. Similarly, a number of publications by Dr Anne Daly from CAEPR (also an ABS Fellow) traced intercensal change in socioeconomic status for particular segments of the indigenous population including youth, older people and the self-employed (Daly 1993d, 1994a, 1994b). A summary of Dr Daly's research in the period 1991–94 has recently been published by the ABS as a monograph (Daly 1995).

The ABS itself has become more actively involved in producing publications both specifically about the indigenous population (ABS
Macroeconomy impacts on indigenous socioeconomic status
A focus on the inter-relationship between the Australian macroeconomy and the economic and employment status of indigenous Australians remains a comparatively under-researched area, with no studies focusing specifically on this issue. This is surprising given the growing impetus for such research, especially given the recent policy focus on the long-term unemployed and regional variations in economic development.

On the other hand, most research that has examined intercensal change in the economic status of indigenous Australians has also assessed relative change in status for the rest of the population. Hence there has been a consistent attempt in most statistical research to assess the impact that conditions in the Australian macroeconomy have on indigenous people. The significant impacts of government intervention, particularly with rapidly expanding labour market programs, like the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, make unambiguous trends extremely difficult to discern.

Major urban areas
Much research outlined above that has examined intercensal change in the economic status of indigenous Australians has differentiated major urban from other urban and rural sections-of-State. However, there is still a dearth of case study published research, particularly based on primary data collection, on urban, and especially metropolitan, areas. There remains a need for research in this area, even if only with groups in major urban areas like those participating in the CDEP scheme in Redfern in inner Sydney (Smith 1995). This is an increasingly serious void as, ipso facto, the bulk of research findings relate to conditions in rural areas and there is a danger that this may misrepresent the situation of many indigenous Australians.

Geographic coverage: regions
There is a growing intellectual focus on regionalism in a number of contemporary contexts in indigenous affairs: regional land agreements, regional service agreements, regional governance and regional economic development. Much of these policy debates are too recent to have been published in the two year period of this monograph. Given the emphasis in the ATSIC legislation on regionalism and regional planning, there also remains a need for regional studies based on primary data collection. There is also a need to explore the economic basis for a regional focus at a theoretical level. Regional planning is poorly understood as a concept in the Australian macroeconomic context and the case for such an approach needs to be clearly established.

Regional economic studies using social accounting or input:output methods were identified as scarce in 1993 and appear to remain so, despite
the publication of an ATSIC consultancy on regional economic planning. There are some notable exceptions to this general observation, like Crough and Christopherson's (1994) very detailed study of the Kimberley. As noted above, regional studies summarised in this study are almost all limited to three areas: the Torres Strait, Cape York Peninsula and the Kimberley. There is potential for a great deal more published research, particularly at the ATSIC regional council level.

Sub-populations
In the period covered by this bibliography, there has been a rapid increase in studies that focus on particular indigenous sub-populations. This is partly a reflection of better access to census information and a more concerted research effort. The major focus has been on sub-populations such as women, youth, the elderly, the self-employed, CDEP scheme employees and Torres Strait Islanders. There remains a very evident absence of research on employed and relatively well-off indigenous Australians (who might provide role models for others); on those residing in suburban situations; and on groups in other specific localities, such as outstations and town camps.

Economic impact of government
There has been a proliferation of research on the economic impact of government policies and programs. As indicated above, this was a major focus of the research included in the three annotated bibliographies published to date. In the context of the AEDP, there is a growing recognition that broad policy like the AEDP needs rigorous evaluation and constant fine-tuning. Certainly the mid-term evaluation of the AEDP (ATSIC 1994h) generated considerable focus on intercensal change in the economic status of indigenous people (Taylor 1993a, 1993b). But there is still a relative shortage of research on the actual mechanics of economic policy formulation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs and on the actual (as distinct from intended) impacts of national programs at the regional and community levels.

Economic implications of age structure
The very important research by demographers on the economic implications of the age structure of the indigenous Australian population reported in the last bibliography has been maintained and enhanced. The availability of 1991 Census data has lengthened the statistical time series further. Earlier projections of rapid growth of the working-age Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population have been confirmed and re-estimated upwards (Gray and Gaminiratne 1993; Gray and Tesfaghiorghis 1993). Such population growth will continue to have significant impact on existing government policy, like the AEDP (Altman and Gaminiratne 1993) and on the resources that will be needed to address let alone redress the socioeconomic disadvantage of indigenous Australians.
Summary

As a general observation, it appears that the research community is reasonably responsive to economic policy research needs: many of the gaps identified in earlier monographs are gradually being filled. This response has been managed in part by ATSIC-commissioned research and partly by normal tertiary education sector processes. Given long lead times in research, material summarised in this (and previous) bibliographies suggests that in recent times there is more research available on indigenous Australians than is generally acknowledged.

Nevertheless, gaps remain. As a general observation, there is still a relative absence of research based on long-term fieldwork and primary data collection. In Australia, such research has traditionally been undertaken by post-graduate students. Our understanding of contemporary economic processes at community and households levels in a number of contexts, including the two extremes, major urban and outstation situations, is limited. There is also a need for enhanced research at the regional level and for a greater understanding of the inter-relationships between the Australian economy and the economic status of indigenous Australians.

New research needs

Research needs are dynamic and to be relevant research must respond to changing circumstances and associated policy environments. Conversely, one could argue that strategic research can influence the nature of policy change. However, as already noted, there is often a long lead time associated with good quality independent research. The key change in circumstances has been Australia's economic recovery, but with persistent unemployment at historically high levels. Federal Government policy initiatives have included a renewed interest in regional development, increased concern about the potential social and economic costs associated with long-term structural unemployment, and concern that the internationalisation of the Australian economy and increased embracing of the market and competition might generate unacceptable costs. These three topics indicate new broad areas for further research.

First, regionalism is already being incorporated into a revitalised AEDP following its review in 1994 that indicated that pursuit of national targets is not suitably responsive to regional diversity. There is a need for regional economic studies that realistically assess economic opportunities, and limitations, in the specific situations in which indigenous Australians live. Such regional economic studies could focus very specifically on the participation of indigenous Australians in specific industries, such as tourism, the arts, mining and pastoralism, and on those situations where competitive advantage occurs or might occur. Such research could also extend to assess options for indigenous Australians to efficiently self-
service in different regional contexts and the import substitution potential of subsistence and other informal productive activity.

Second, long-term unemployment is often masked among indigenous Australians by participation in the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme. This scheme provides indigenous Australians with opportunities to work part-time for wages roughly the equivalent of their social security entitlements. Expenditure by ATSIC in 1994–95 on this one program currently totals $278 million (accounting for about 30 per cent of ATSIC's total program expenditure) which has about 27,000 participants. But there is still insufficient case study research that examines the operations of the scheme at the community level and that assesses options available to either access training when 'employed' under the scheme or to exit to full-time employment (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu 1993; Smith 1994b, 1995). There are indications that the scheme is operating variably across diverse indigenous Australian communities; research that highlights exemplary-practice outcomes from a selection of successful participating communities would be invaluable.

Third, with an increased emphasis on competition policy, there is a need for assessment of the performance of indigenous enterprises in an increasingly competitive business environment. As a general rule, commercial viability has been increasingly used as a precondition for government subvention of indigenous enterprises. Simultaneously, there has been a greater emphasis on joint venturing with the private sector. ATSIC's Commercial Development Corporation has used its discretionary, but limited, capital to strategically participate as an equity stakeholder in a number of joint ventures with regional indigenous and private sector interests. Such joint venturing is increasingly associated with mining and tourism developments where local and regional indigenous interests have a degree of leverage (usually associated with statutory land or native title rights) and associated buy-in options. As the indigenous asset base expands and as the number of successful joint ventures increases, there is again a need for research that highlights best practice.

Policy implications

There are some important features highlighted by the abstracts of economic policy research on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people provided by Linda Roach and Hilary Bek in this monograph. First, a positive feature of research is the growing trend for both consultancy and government research to be published, thus making it available for a wider audience. Second, there is a growing statistical data base being created that can be used for policy formulation. The important foundation laid using 1986 Census data, summarised in Roach and Probst (1993), has now been considerably enhanced with analyses of 1991 Census data. Recent major inquiries, such as the National Report of the Royal Commission into
Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Commonwealth of Australia 1991), depicted economic research in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs as scarce. This scarcity is being rapidly and systematically redressed, as highlighted by the compendium of research presented in both this and the previous bibliographies. Third, there are strong indications that research is having a policy impact. The lexicon of policy-makers is clearly being influenced by research findings with phrases such as policy realism, diversity of circumstances, regional variability and demographic transitions being regularly used.

It is important that research output and focus is maintained in future so that longer-term analyses of a wide range of factors, including the links between education and employment, the effectiveness of the AEDP and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy, the accessing of Working Nation programs by indigenous people, the demographic composition and location of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and the economic impacts of land rights and native title can be undertaken. Such analyses will, in turn, prove invaluable, enabling the fine-tuning of government policies and programs so that the overriding objective of improving the socioeconomic status of indigenous Australians, in all their economic, locational, cultural, demographic and structural diversity, can be achieved.

References not in this bibliography


ABORIGINAL and TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION 1994. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commercial Development Corporation, (included in a package of information), Bonner House, Neptune Street, Woden, 10pp.

Available from
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commercial Development Corporation; free publication.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Commercial Development Corporation, economic independence, self-management, economic self-sufficiency, enterprises.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commercial Development Corporation (CDC) is a Commonwealth statutory authority, established in 1990. It is not part of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). The CDC's purpose is to establish a commercial portfolio of investments to establish a capital fund for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by achieving indigenous control and management of mainstream commercial ventures which impact on indigenous peoples. It also aims, through its investment activities, to generate indigenous employment and provide long-term income generation capability and assets backing to indigenous commercial ventures. It provides support services and promotes economic self-management and financial independence for indigenous peoples. The primary criteria for the CDC when considering investment is commercial viability. It does not have the additional social developmental focus of ATSIC's Business Development Unit.

The CDC meets running costs from its normal commercial activities. However, to June 1994, it had received $57.4 million in capital subventions from the Commonwealth. The CDC's total level of investment is $61 million. The CDC's major investment to date has been to take up equity in the development of a tourist resort at Kings Canyon, in the Watarranka National Park in Central Australia, a joint venture between several indigenous investment companies. The corporation has also invested in a number of other ventures. It has taken up a 24.5 per cent equity in a motor vehicle franchise, ensuring employment and training opportunities for indigenous people within the company. In a joint venture with Tiwi Land
Council, the CDC has purchased Barra Base fishing lodge on Bathurst Island and leased it for ten years to a fishing operator. Loan and equity funding has been provided by the Corporation in a joint venture with the Jawoyn Association to purchase 50 per cent of Katherine Gorge Cruises. The Corporation has negotiated a joint venture with the Jawoyn Association Aboriginal Corporation and another company to provide mining services to the Zapopan NL Mt Todd mine. The Corporation has provided a loan to the Jawoyn to purchase 25 per cent equity in the venture and has also taken up 25 per cent equity in its own right. The Corporation's other investments include a residential housing development, a timber processing plant, an oyster farm and a shopping complex.

Key cross-references


Available from
Royal Commission Government Response Monitoring Unit, ATSIC; free publication.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), ATSIC, Aboriginal Development Employment Policy (AEDP), self-reliance, self-determination, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment, economic development.

The Report states that in the long term, a permanent reduction in the number of indigenous people dying in custody depends on action on the issues identified by the Royal Commission, particularly unemployment. In the Government's view the most pressing issue is the development of a broader economic base for indigenous people. An economic base will empower communities and individuals, thereby reducing the number of people entering custody in the first place. New and existing Commonwealth programs will broaden the income base of indigenous
communities. These should help reduce dependence on government welfare and lead to a greater sense of self-control.

The Commonwealth's economic development responses to the RCIADIC have been developed within the AEDP. In line with this policy, ATSIC is developing an economic development strategy. The framework identifies a process through which indigenous communities can move away from welfare dependence through a series of long-term programs. The CDEP scheme is recognised as a first crucial step and provides a basis on which to build further economic initiatives. A major review found that the CDEP scheme has had a significant impact on the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of communities. The review recommended improving its effectiveness in income generation and long-term employment. Under the CDEP scheme, communities swap their members' unemployment benefits for work and wages for community members. Work is part-time and total wages are at a similar level to unemployment benefits.

A new program, the Community Economic Initiative Scheme, contributes to the economic growth of communities by establishing income-generating activities. It is based on rigorous planning at regional, community and business levels, and enables economic goals to be consistent with social and cultural goals. ATSIC is working with indigenous people and industry representatives to develop strategies in arts, tourism and rural industries. Means of providing appropriate support through planning, training, and advice infrastructure are being developed.

In the overview of government responses to the Royal Commission, governments agreed that self-determination was a prerequisite for economic development, including increasing the role of ATSIC regional councils. ATSIC has increased the proportion of funds controlled directly by regional councils, devolving decision-making and program delivery to indigenous organisations and communities, and through regional and community planning.

Key cross-references


Available from
Royal Commission Government Response Monitoring Unit, ATSIC; free publication.
Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), Commonwealth/State joint responsibilities, self-determination, self-reliance.

This volume provides comment on implementation of the response to each recommendation of the RCIADIC for which the Commonwealth shares responsibility.

Recommendation 301 suggested that the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments consider the desirability of entering into specific agreements for funding under the Commonwealth's AEDP which set out agreed objectives, strategies and outcomes. The Commonwealth responded that it would seek the agreement of State and Territory Governments and the Australian Local Government Association to set goals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development as a cornerstone of a National Aboriginal Policy Statement. Joint responsibility agreements on objectives, strategies and outcomes will provide the basis for funding arrangements. The development of a multilateral policy statement was endorsed by the Heads of Government meeting in May 1992. Negotiations took place in 1992 between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments and the Australian Local Government Association, and resulted in the National Commitment to Improved Outcomes in the Delivery of Programs and Services for Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.

The National Commitment sets out principles and objectives to be adopted by governments in respect to the delivery of programs and services. All governments agreed to promote the development of greater economic independence and self-reliance within indigenous communities with employment, training and education identified as areas requiring attention. The National Commitment provides a framework for bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth, States and Territories on arrangements for specific functional areas of service delivery. These joint responsibility agreements have initially been proposed for a number of areas including housing, infrastructure and health and will be further developed in 1993–94. The Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs has appointed an AEDP Steering Committee to direct the mid-term review of the AEDP and associated economic and employment programs; the Steering Committee will make policy recommendations.

Key cross-references

*Available from*
ATSIC; free publication.

*Geographic area*
Australia-wide.

*Key words*
ATSIC regional councils, regional planning.

The Act which established ATSIC required that regional councils be set up throughout Australia, and that each regional council formulate a Regional Plan for improving the economic, social and cultural status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents of the region.

The purpose of this information paper is to provide ATSIC Chairpersons and regional council Chairpersons with a document which summarises the draft regional plans received by ATSIC’s Regional Support Branch from regional councils throughout Australia. The task of regional planning was made more difficult for regional councils by the lack of community and community organisation plans which detail specific visions, goals and strategies; the general lack of understanding in the community, and in government agencies, about the planning process; and the lack of statistical information about regions, such as health, housing and employment statistics.

Bringing the summarised draft regional plans and priorities of the regional councils throughout Australia together in one document enables comparisons to be made between regional councils. Analysis of the Plans reveals some common themes identified as priority areas by regional councils, such as housing, land, health and employment.

*Key cross-references*

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION (ATSIC) 1993d. *Indigenous Australia Today: An Overview by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission*, ATSIC, Canberra, 43pp.

*Available from*
ATSIC; free publication.
Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
ATSIC, employment, income, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, government policy, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, equity, disadvantage.

This booklet reviews the economic position of Australia's indigenous population and asks whether government programs are meeting objectives. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, comprising about 1.6 per cent of the Australian population, grew at twice the rate of the overall population between 1986 and 1991. The median age of the indigenous population in 1991 was 20 years compared to 30 years for the Australian population as a whole. The indigenous working-age population (those aged between 15 and 64 years) grew 2.4 times as fast as the non-indigenous working-age population. Twenty-seven per cent of indigenous people lived in urban areas compared with 62 per cent of the total population. By 1996, the indigenous population is projected to increase by 13 per cent to 303,000, with a figure of 340,000 projected for 2001.

With respect to employment, the position of indigenous people improved relative to other Australians, especially for women, between 1986 and 1991. The unemployment rate in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander labour force was 30 per cent in 1991, down from 35.3 per cent in 1986. However, in 1991 levels were still 2.6 times higher than those for other Australians. Also, indigenous Australians suffer high levels of long-term unemployment: 60 to 70 per cent of indigenous people who are unemployed fall into this category, compared with 46 per cent of all Australians who are unemployed. Much of the growth in indigenous employment was due to the CDEP scheme which is based on substituting for unemployment entitlements and provides part-time low skilled employment. There has also been an increase in employment in the Commonwealth Public Service and in ATSIC-funded organisations; the private sector has made little contribution to employment growth.

There was no change in relative income status with the mean for indigenous people remaining at under two-thirds of the national figure. This reflects the fact that much indigenous employment is part-time, low-skilled, based in the community sector in government-funded indigenous organisations where award wages still do not prevail, and in the CDEP scheme. In health, housing, and the social justice system inequalities also remain. A recent House of Representative Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs report Access and Equity: Rhetoric or Reality points to the cultural and other barriers to indigenous people gaining full access to a range of mainstream government services and programs. The objective of ATSIC's programs is to provide services
which meet the particular requirements of indigenous people. Measurement of the success and cost-effectiveness of its policies and programs is ongoing, such as the recent review of the Aboriginal Employment Development Policy.

**Key cross-references**


**Available from**
Housing and Infrastructure Section, ATSIC; free publication.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
ATSIC, housing need in remote areas, community infrastructure.

This report is Stage One of the National Housing and Community Infrastructure Needs Survey which collected data on rural and remote areas at the regional, state and national levels during April–May 1992. The plan is to cover metropolitan and major urban areas of Australia with a second stage of the survey. A small number of major urban centres have been included in Stage One. Major urban is defined as being a large provincial centre with an indigenous population exceeding 1,000 persons.

The objectives of the survey were to assess the housing need of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people where they live; identify the infrastructure resources that currently exist in discrete communities and the additional resources required to meet the identified housing need; and, develop estimates of costs for upgrading and/or providing accommodation and utility services to provide for the established need. The survey will provide ATSIC with a basis for better understanding of the total cost of meeting housing needs and services.

Stage One of the Survey collected information across indigenous communities, outstations and town camps. Given the wide diversity of circumstances of indigenous people, a tenet of the survey was that it be structured in a manner appropriate to the cultural requirements of any locality. This requirement was met by the formation of reference groups which were representative of the population in each centre or locality. The survey report is presented in a series of statistical tables setting out the
needs of indigenous communities. The tables provide population numbers in the centres surveyed; the estimated cost of providing/repairing houses, health care centres, educational services and upgrading roads, by state; and listed indigenous communities without formal land tenure. The tables show, for example, that the estimated cost of providing housing and repairing it in the areas surveyed, Australia-wide, was $1,088.4 million and $280 million, respectively. The equivalent costs for the Northern Territory were $360 million and $78.3 million. The cost of providing internal and access roads to the areas surveyed Australia-wide totalled $347 million.

**Key cross-references**

**ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION (ATSIC) 1994a.** *Indigenous Australia Today: An Overview by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission,* ATSIC, Canberra, 43pp.

Available from
ATSIC; free publication.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
ATSIC, employment, labour force status, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

In 1991, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population comprised about 1.6 per cent of the overall Australian population and was more youthful than the overall population, with evidence of rapid growth in its working-age population. It grew by 18 per cent, 2.4 times as fast as the non-indigenous working-age population. The unemployment rate in the indigenous labour force was 30.8 per cent in 1991, down from 35.3 in 1986. In the same period unemployment in the total Australian labour force increased, from 9.2 per cent to 11.7 per cent. The rate of indigenous participation in the labour force increased from 48 per cent to 51 per cent between 1986 and 1991. However, three out of ten indigenous Australians in the labour force were unemployed. In large measure the intercensal growth in indigenous employment was due to the expansion of the CDEP scheme, under which participants have the opportunity to work on community projects funded by foregone unemployment benefits. Much of this employment is part-time. It has been estimated that around 60 per cent of the increase in indigenous employment between 1986 and 1991 was due
to expansion of employment under the CDEP scheme. Employment grew proportionally more for women than for men. There has been no change in relative income status, with the mean for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people remaining under two-thirds of the national figure.

Over 32 per cent of the indigenous working-age population lived in rural areas in 1991, compared with less than 15 per cent of the total population. Despite the underdeveloped mainstream labour markets in rural areas, it is in these locations that improvement in the indigenous labour market has been most evident. Some 46 per cent of the increase in the number of jobs for indigenous people were created in rural areas. This directly reflects the expansion of the CDEP scheme. By mid 1991 there were 18,000 participants compared with 4,000 in 1986. The expansion of the CDEP scheme accounted for virtually all net growth in employment in rural areas.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*
ATSIC; free publication.

**Geographic area**
Rural Australia.

**Key words**
ATSIC, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), government policy, government programs, economic self-sufficiency, indigenous autonomy, training, rural development.

The Commonwealth Government’s response to the RCIADIC requested the development of a Rural Industry Strategy to address economic disadvantage in regard to indigenous people. The Strategy is a first step in addressing issues for indigenous landowners and residents, plus indigenous people who seek to participate in rural industries and other land-based industries such as tourism and arts and crafts. Rural industries are difficult to start and maintain as complex risk factors affect all rural activities. The Strategy recognises that much land acquisition by indigenous people is not primarily for the development of an enterprise base but is often for a broader set of social and cultural goals. It also notes that governments Australia-wide have recognised the inability of the rural sector to support
the current number of participants and are providing measures to encourage their exit from rural areas.

The Rural Industry Strategy has a key objective of empowering indigenous people to make the decisions associated with the use and management of their rural resources. Another objective is to identify and create employment opportunities in indigenous communities and in mainstream rural industries. There may be opportunities to further identify employment in a range of areas including indigenous-owned and community businesses, rural industry organisations, farms, sub-contracting arrangements or self-employment with links to rural industries. The development of enterprise structures pertinent to the needs of indigenous rural enterprises is emphasised, including the critical evaluation of the models that they currently support. Independent directors should sit on enterprise boards to enhance technical management and financial skills. For larger enterprises, management committees should be encouraged to explore joint ventures, especially where risk management is involved or capital inadequate. ATSIC should support regional reviews and the development of strategies for improving performance. Training in enterprise development should aim to assist indigenous organisations to attract development funding and meet accounting criteria. A further aim is to identify mechanisms whereby indigenous people can secure greater access to rural development investment finance and financial services of banks and other lending institutions.

Key cross-references
ATSIC 1994c, 1994d; Daly, A.E. 1993b; Sanders, W. 1994b.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION

Available from
ATSIC; free publication.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
ATSIC, tourism, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), government policy, employment, enterprises, economic self-sufficiency.

An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Industry Advisory Committee made up of indigenous representatives, tourism operators and organisations. State/Territory nominees and Commonwealth agencies was
formed as part of the government's response to the recommendations of the RCIADIC. The National Centre for Studies in Travel and Tourism was appointed to prepare the draft Strategy. The draft Strategy sought to identify ways for indigenous people to become involved in the industry. The research included a national survey of indigenous tourism-related enterprises, using 11 of these as case-studies and extensive consultations with indigenous communities.

The consultants estimated that in 1991 2,500 indigenous people were employed in tourism, but that they were under-represented in employment in the tourism industry. The research showed a lack of awareness by tourism employers of the benefits of employing indigenous people. The survey revealed 500 indigenous tourism-related enterprises operating across Australia. Represented were arts and crafts, cultural centres, accommodation, performing arts, tours and other community-based enterprises. Indigenous tourism enterprises have a low success rate (but not necessarily lower than non-indigenous tourism enterprises).

The draft Strategy proposed the employment of an additional 8,500 indigenous people in the industry by the year 2000 as an achievable target, comprising 1,400 new jobs in existing indigenous enterprises and 7,100 in new indigenous enterprises and non-indigenous tourism organisations. The Department of Employment, Education and Training's present employment strategies show potential for meeting the needs of employers as well as of indigenous people who want a career in tourism.

The prospects of indigenous enterprises could be improved dramatically as the survey and enterprise case studies had revealed some consistency in the key factors of enterprise success or failure. Without exception, the commitment, effort, and competence of one or two people was shown to be vital to the success of a tourism enterprises, regardless of whether the enterprise was an individual, a family or community project. The need for better project planning in both financial and operational terms was also highlighted as this had been the cause of many business failures. The draft Strategy indicated a pressing need for appropriate training and education. While there are programs available, there are issues of access, and a lack of awareness among indigenous people of courses and the wider training requirements of the industry.

Key cross-references

Available from
ATSIC; free publication.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
ATSIC, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), arts, employment, economic independence, government policy, self-reliance.

The Cultural Industry Strategy for the development, implementation and evaluation of strategies to strengthen industry participation of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in the arts forms part of the Federal Government's response to the recommendations of the RCIADIC. The art forms included under the Strategy are visual arts, crafts and design, performing arts and literature. The objective of the Committee was to establish criteria for ATSIC funding of community-based income-generating projects. The Committee worked with Arts Training Northern Territory as consultants to develop recommendations. The research undertaken included consultations with key people in the industry, the review of reports and literature, and oral and written submissions.

The consultants reported a lack of data on indigenous participation in the cultural industry within Australia, but that the review of the industry in 1989 had estimated 6,000 were employed in the visual arts, crafts and design sections of the industry, with an annual retail value of $84 million. Details of policy expenditure indicate that for the 1993–94 financial year expenditure by ATSIC, Australia Council, and State/Territory Ministries through grants programs totalled $20.6 million. However, funding levels were abnormally high due to additional funding for the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

The vision of the draft Cultural Industry Strategy is to maintain the spiritual meaning of indigenous culture while at the same time utilising it as a source of a sustainable economic base for indigenous people. The report emphasises the need to overcome the lack of control and low level of participation of indigenous people in the cultural industry; to improve the financial return on the products and services produced by them; to maximise employment opportunities for indigenous people by providing specialist training at various levels, in such areas as curating and conservation, and to provide assistance with regard to copyright protection. A major problem is the absence of a coordinated infrastructure and database to support the industry.
A 1993 Australia Council report indicated that almost half of all international visitors were interested in learning about indigenous culture. On this basis the consultants assess that the industry will grow. The Cultural Advisory Committee will seek to address key points raised by the consultants by setting up pilot projects to test strategies before the final Cultural Industry Strategy is formulated in 1997.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*
ATSIC; free publication.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
ATSIC regions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment, unemployment, income, housing.

In 1991, 265,458 people identified themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. This is an increase of 17 per cent over the 1986 Census figure. Since indigenous people first had the chance to identify, in the 1971 Census, the numbers have grown from 115,963. There were 238,575 Aboriginal persons and 26,883 Torres Strait Islanders counted in the 1991 Census. Indigenous people comprise 1.6 per cent of the Australian population. The indigenous population is expected to increase to over 300,000 by 1996. The continuing high level of growth is due to more people choosing to identify as indigenous as well as a high natural increase. About 25 per cent of indigenous people live in each of New South Wales and Queensland. There are proportionally more infants (0–4 years), children (5–14 years), and youth (15–24 years) in the indigenous population and fewer adults (25–64 years) and elderly (65 years and over), compared with the total Australian population. The youthfulness of the indigenous population is further highlighted by the fact that the median age of the population is 19 years compared with 32 years for the total Australian population.
In 1991, there were 82,185 indigenous people participating in the labour force. Of these, 25,288 were unemployed. Sydney Regional Council area had the most unemployed indigenous people (2,208) followed by Coffs Harbour with 2,043. The Warburton Region had the lowest unemployment numbers of all regions. Cooktown had the highest employment rate (55 per cent) and Tennant Creek the lowest (21 per cent), though the impact of the CDEP scheme confuses the picture. Labour force participation rates varied from 25 per cent in the Nhulunbuy Region to 62 per cent in Tasmania.

Median individual incomes earned by indigenous people varied across Australia from $11,500 in the Sydney Region to $5,800 in the Warburton Region. Indigenous households in the Bourke Region had the lowest median income ($21,800) and Alice Springs Region households had the highest ($33,500). Indigenous families in the Warburton Region had the lowest median income with $19,000, $12,000 less per family than the median for Sydney Region families. Taking the home ownership rate as the total of those who own or are buying their own homes, the indigenous home ownership rate of less than 28 per cent is less than half of that of all Australians. Indigenous home ownership rates vary across the country from a low 2 per cent in Warburton Region to 56 per cent in Tasmania.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*
ATSIC; free publication.

**Geographic area**
Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands, north-western South Australia.

**Key words**
ATSIC, economic development, employment, income, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, housing.

This is a study of the economic conditions in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands (population approximately 2,000) undertaken to provide base information to assist indigenous communities, regional councils, regional organisations and ATSIC with planning and resource distribution. The aims were to establish the cost of living in remote indigenous communities
and compare it with rural and urban centres; determine the manner of income distribution; establish the current levels of enterprise activities available in these communities; and assess the impact of existing and future enterprises and economic opportunities. The appropriateness of the current CDEP scheme wage, and recurrent and capital funding formulas was also investigated. To undertake the study the consultants conducted a literature review and interviewed administrators and household members in 15 communities. Questionnaires were used to gather data on standard of living and services available. Information was collected regarding CDEP participation and wages. Store managers were surveyed and discussions held with art and craft coordinators, health and education bodies, and the Department of Social Security. The Australian Bureau of Statistics Community Profiles based on 1991 Census data were also utilised.

The report gives detailed information on employment and income. The majority of workers in the Anangu Pitjantjatara Lands (80 per cent) were employed under the CDEP scheme. ATSIC provided $164 per participant per week ($9.2 million per year). Anangu also work in health, education, policing, operate enterprises and are social security recipients. Average per capita income was approximately $7,148 per year. Individual incomes recorded by the sample survey and also by the 1991 Census were, on average, well below those of Alice Springs and Adelaide. Up to 75 per cent of Anangu earned less than $12,000 in 1991, compared to 43 per cent of Adelaide residents and 30 per cent of Alice Springs residents. The distribution of income also differed, with a wide gap between salaried employees and CDEP participants. Nearly all households received income in kind through redistribution from other households and bush tucker. Bush tucker was estimated to be worth $116 per person per year. Groceries and fruit and vegetables were respectively 30 and 45 per cent more expensive than in Adelaide. Fuel and other household items were also more expensive. Store turnover suggests that nearly half of all cash entering the communities is spent at the community store.

The main enterprises were arts and crafts, pastoralism and stores. Virtually all Anangu enterprises were either self-sustaining or non-profit. Most enterprises were supported by CDEP wages and on-cost allocations. Over $650,000 was spent on project on-costs in 1992–93. No Anangu own their homes due to the communal land ownership system; this a major obstacle to enterprise development, since Anangu are generally unable to accumulate sufficient equity to obtain enterprise loans.

Key cross-references
The availability of opportunities for employment, enterprise development and training is central to the quest of indigenous people for economic independence. This is especially the case in rural areas, as a disproportionately high number of indigenous people live in these areas. This book is a guide to the relevant Commonwealth services and programs in rural industries.

The CDC is a Commonwealth statutory authority concerned with indigenous economic development. Its aims are to promote economic self-management, self-determination and financial independence through commercial activities. The opportunities and services available are joint venture activities where the CDC and indigenous groups join together to develop, manage and operate a business venture. Ventures entered into include agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, tourism and mining.

There are several employment and business support programs run by ATSIC which assist indigenous people in rural areas. Under the AEDP, the CDEP scheme is the largest employment program, offering indigenous people who are unemployed the opportunity to work in community projects and enterprises. Community members forego their unemployment benefits; in exchange ATSIC provides funds to community organisations to employ community members on community-managed projects. In June 1993 there were a total of 220 CDEP schemes and 22,000 participants. The Business Funding Program helps indigenous people to establish small businesses by providing concessional finance in the form of loans and guarantees and access to professional advice and expertise. The Community Economic Initiatives Scheme was established in response to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody which recommended a distinction between projects which were funded on the basis of commercial viability and social development projects. Other ATSIC programs include Inwork Traineeship Program aimed at providing employment and training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and Enterprise Employment
Program which subsidises indigenous employment in community-based enterprises. The book also contains information on programs and services available from mainstream areas such as the Department of Employment Education and Training, Austrade, Australian Nature Conservation Agency and Department of Industry, Science and Technology.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commercial Development Corporation 1994; ATSIC 1994b, 1994c, 1994d; Daly, A.E. 1993b; Daly, A.E. and Hawke, A.E. 1993.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION (ATSIC) 1994h. Review of the AEDP (Chairperson A. Bamblett), ATSIC, Canberra, 280pp.

Available from
ATSIC; free publication.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
ATSIC, Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), employment, income, economic development, equity.

The aim of the AEDP is for indigenous Australians to achieve equity with other Australians in employment, income, education and welfare dependence. The AEDP was established in 1987 in response to the unacceptably high levels of unemployment among indigenous people and their lack of access to economic resources and opportunities. Strategies have included provision of labour market assistance to: facilitate access to mainstream employment; indigenous controlled community development activities; developing enterprises; and enhancing indigenous control in the delivery of programs.

The Review Committee emphasised that economic growth alone will not solve the problem of long-term unemployment, and that without continuing specific measures it is unlikely that indigenous people will benefit equitably from new jobs stemming from economic growth. It also emphasises the need for program assistance to be more responsive to the local economic environment; the importance of labour market programs in maintaining the attachment of indigenous clients to the labour market through the provision of work opportunities and skills; and that the design, delivery and evaluation of labour market programs needs to be negotiated on the basis of self-management. The Review identified the continuing
need for government to assist in expansion of the indigenous economic base, and in accessing mainstream labour markets.

Available data on the employment and income status of indigenous people indicates an improvement in their relative employment position. In a period when the mainstream labour force experienced increasing levels of unemployment, indigenous unemployment fell by 4.5 per cent. However, their overall economic and employment situation remains poor. Indigenous people are three times more likely to be unemployed than other Australians, their average median income has declined marginally relative to the national average, and there is no evidence to indicate an overall reduction in dependency on welfare. AEDP programs have been beneficial. Indigenous employment has increased particularly in rural areas largely because of the growth of the CDEP scheme. By 1993, 22,000 indigenous Australians participated in CDEP projects, representing one-third of the employed indigenous labour force. At the same time, the number of indigenous people who are self-employed doubled. There has been a substantial increase in the community service sector especially in indigenous community organisations. At the Commonwealth level there has been a significant improvement in public sector employment. However, the extent of the contribution of the CDEP scheme to employment growth has meant that growth in the indigenous labour market has not been marked by improvements in income equity, significant economic empowerment, skills enhancement, or more employment in the private sector.

The growth rate of the indigenous population between 1986 and 1991 was over 16 per cent, twice that of the Australian growth rate of the population as a whole. The review sees the challenge of the AEDP in the remainder of the decade as to continue to deliver increasing levels of employment growth and ensure these employment opportunities are of good quality. Indigenous people's employment needs to be characterised by greater opportunities for training to gain workforce qualifications.

Key cross-references


Available from
Out of print; available in libraries.
**Geographic area**  
Australia-wide.

**Key words**  
Arts and crafts, funding, employment, survey, tourism, ATSIC, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the report was required to review the indigenous arts and cultural industry, to form a basis for the industry. The focus was on visual arts, crafts and design; performing arts; and writing, covering cultural and economic aspects as well as employment, training and education. The consultant was also required to investigate funding and research needs. To undertake the research, indigenous people were invited to participate in the consultation process. Workshops were held Australia-wide, key people and organisations were consulted, relevant literature reviewed, and written submissions were invited.

The consultants found that industry data was extremely limited across all art form areas. Specific information on the employment of indigenous people in all parts of the industry was minimal. In 1989 Altman estimated that in 1987–88 there were around 6,000 indigenous people working in arts and crafts, alone. The report pointed out that sale of arts and crafts is tied inextricably to tourism, and especially to international tourism, with the annual number of international visitors moving to beyond 2 million. The Australia Council undertook surveys in 1990 and 1993 on arts and culture with respect to the tourism industry. The 1993 survey indicated that 48 per cent of international visitors to Australia are interested in seeing and learning about indigenous art and culture. This survey estimated the value of purchases of arts and souvenirs at $46 million per annum, up from their 1990 estimate of $30 million per annum (although the proportion of output produced by indigenous people was not estimated). The consultant estimated the total annual retail value of the indigenous arts and culture industry output is about $84 million, over half of this being purchased by overseas visitors. This figure excludes direct overseas sales which are of unknown magnitude; some community-based art centres sell 60 per cent of their output overseas. In terms of the domestic residential market, around 1.25 million Australian residents were estimated to have bought indigenous art and craft in the past year. Program allocations on indigenous arts and culture in 1993–94 by ATSIC, the Australia Council, and States and Territories were almost $31 million, with over $22.5 million of this from ATSIC. There was also arts and culture funding through the CDEP scheme.

Some sentiments of indigenous people were that funding sources were confusing, indigenous people should be involved at all levels of decision-making in the arts and cultural industry, and there is a lack of employment and training opportunities. They concluded that ATSIC needs
to be more serious about the arts and cultural industry as it is at the heart of cultural beliefs and values, self-determination, and dollar income. The consultant predicted that the industry will grow with the upsurge of interest in indigenous culture by tourists, and concluded that it has a key role, but the economic dimension needs more emphasis in terms of the commitment of government resources to its support.

Key cross-references


Available from
Out of print; available in libraries.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Social justice, self-determination, government programs, government services, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC).

In January 1993, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commission was created under the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act, 1986 as part of the Commonwealth Government's commitment to implementing the recommendations of the RCIADIC. This is the Commission's first report.

The report provides an analysis of the Commonwealth's major statement concerning the indigenous peoples of Australia, Social Justice for Indigenous Australians 1992–1993. The central objectives of the Commonwealth's Social Justice Strategy are to achieve a society in which economic resources are distributed fairly and where there is equal access to community services. This is to be achieved by targeting areas of disadvantage and by devising beneficial remedial programs. Social Justice for Indigenous Australians is divided into 'Needs and programs' and 'Detailed program descriptions'. This Report suggests that such a model of social justice starts from an incorrect premise, as it is welfare-based, constructing social justice for indigenous Australians primarily on the basis of needs and disadvantages rather than rights and entitlements. Policies and programs which rest primarily on the perception of need and powerlessness reinforce the powerlessness of the recipients who are to be 'given' justice
rather than receiving their rights. The recognition of entitlement is in itself an act of empowerment.

The model relies largely on government initiatives and discretion to identify priorities, formulate policy and deliver programs; it is a model based on well-intentioned but destructive paternalism, antagonistic to self-determination by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Social justice is about the exercise of human rights; indigenous people cannot be regarded as passive recipients of government largesse but must be seen as active participants in the formulation of policies and delivery of programs. Social justice must always be considered from a perspective grounded in the daily lives of indigenous people. Social justice means having an adequate water supply, cooking facilities, sanitation, genuine employment, good health and a life expectancy equivalent to others in society. It also means the ability to nourish children and send them to school where their education equips them for employment and also reinforces their knowledge of their cultural inheritance. The report also includes material on native title, self-determination, and the powers, function and responsibilities of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commission.

Key cross-references
ATSIC 1993a, 1993b; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commission 1994; Commonwealth of Australia 1993a; Folds, R. 1993; Keating, P.J. (Prime Minister) and Howe, B. (MP) 1994.


Available from
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commission; free publication.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Social justice, government policy, government programs, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), native title.

Previous government reports, including the RCIADIC Report, have contributed little to positive change in indigenous people's lives. Although often political commitment has been lacking, and the bureaucracies responsible for the implementation of recommendations have not embued their work with the sense of urgency it warrants, the author is not convinced that this is the reason for the disappointing results. This is
because, on the other hand, government has also produced many accurate assessments of the situation of indigenous people in Australia, and has developed many sound proposals for reform. Also, there has been an unprecedented level of political will, especially at the Federal level. The author states that the problem is an elusive 'something more' that is needed: a genuine willingness on the part of the non-indigenous state to enter into real negotiation with indigenous peoples. Negotiation means non-indigenous people working with indigenous people in specific contexts and together defining their understanding of the situation, setting objectives and devising the means to achieving those objectives. Negotiation is not governments asking questions, drawing up their version of indigenous people's answers to those questions and then devising new strategies. Governments deny this split in perspectives, and how this impacts on the type and effectiveness of policies.

The Report suggests part of the problem lies in the imbalance of power between indigenous people and the dominant system. However, this power balance has shifted recently, through Australia's acceptance of developments in international human rights law in relation to indigenous peoples. This has resulted, for example, in the High Court's decision on native title and the drafting of the Native Title Act 1993. Since the passage of that Act, some indigenous people will have the foothold of native title itself, to compel other parties, including mining companies, pastoralists and governments to the negotiating table.

The Report also contains chapters on indigenous health, and the Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, including its implementation.

Key cross-references
ATSIC 1993a, 1993b; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commission 1993; Commonwealth of Australia 1993a; Folds, R. 1993; Keating, P.J. (Prime Minister) and Howe, B. (MP) 1994.


Available from
May be viewed in ACIL Library; photocopy available at cost.

Geographic area
Northern Territory.
This consultancy report for Energy Resources of Australia Ltd (ERA) estimates the contribution of the first 11 years, up to 1991–92, of the Ranger uranium project to the Northern Territory and Australian economies. Four components of the Ranger Project are measured in 1990–91 money terms: the mine operation itself, consisting of the sales revenue of minerals extracted minus the non-labour services and materials purchased from outside suppliers ($5,030 million); the incidental benefits to the tourism industry, mainly through infrastructure provision ($126 million); excess outlay by the mining company on town infrastructure now available to other parties ($23 million); and (Commonwealth) support of activities of the Office of Supervising Scientist ($102 million). Additional components, identified but not quantified in the report, are wider benefits to scientific knowledge and a uranium-associated Commonwealth administrative effort.

Included in the first component measured, the contribution of the mine operation, is the contribution to Aboriginal well-being through payments of statutory royalties and rentals. Over its life to date, Ranger has contributed 45 per cent ($288 million) of all royalty equivalents directed to the Aboriginals Benefit Trust Account (ABTA) from the Commonwealth. The Report erroneously identifies statutory royalties paid to the Commonwealth (77 per cent of which are then transferred by the Commonwealth to the ABTA) as an ERA contribution to meeting administrative costs of land councils, payments to Aboriginal groups affected by mining operations on Aboriginal land through land councils, and payments to Aboriginals throughout the Northern Territory, under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976. While it is indisputable that Aboriginal interests have benefited from the ERA operation on Aboriginal land, this has occurred with little marginal financial impost on the mining company. Ranger agreement annual rental payments to traditional owners made by ERA from 1981–82 to 1991–92 total $2,200,000; these are the only non-statutory payments made by ERA.

By employing a measurement approach in keeping with national accounting principles, including the measurement of 'value added' or the key factors of production, the report is able to compare Ranger's contribution to 1991–92 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with that of other sectors of the Northern Territory and Australian economies. The results obtained include 'highlights' such as: Ranger has contributed more than one-third of the whole mining sector's contribution to the Northern Territory's GDP over its life; and in 1991–92 money terms, the Ranger mine has contributed to the Northern Territory and Australian economies the equivalent of more than the Northern Territory's GDP in 1991–92.
Key cross-references


Available from
Office of Northern Development; free publication.

Geographic area
Northern Australia.

Key words
Tourism policy, enterprises, funding, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics.

Altman maps out some strategic indigenous tourism policy directions for indigenous involvement in the tourism industry in Northern Australia. He suggests that potential exists for contractual arrangements between tour operators and indigenous people. For example, Tiwi Tours negotiated a product with people on Melville and Bathurst Islands that was representative of contemporary Tiwi culture. Tourism is part of the private sector and there is a need to attract private venture capital to the industry from commercial banks and possibly in partnership with non-indigenous entrepreneurs. There is a need for greater private sector participation in the indigenous sector of the industry. Altman suggests that a crucial intermediary role is required to match potential investors with private sector expertise. Options for strategic regionalism and devolution need to be explored. For example, there is nothing to prevent the Jawoyn Association, with its commercial concessions in Nitmiluk National Park and access to discretionary resources from park rental payments, from becoming a key player in the Katherine regional economy.

The author points to the serious lack of data on the elements of indigenous tourism, such as indigenous views regarding aspirations for industry involvement. Data are a primary requirement for policy formation and strategy; however policy is formulated in an information void.
Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR: 56.

Geographic area
Australia-wide with emphasis on the Northern Territory.

Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), tourism, tourism policy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, enterprises.

There is a growing policy impetus for increased indigenous participation in tourism, linked to a perception that 'Aboriginality' helps to make Australia a unique tourist destination. Also, there is pressure to find employment niches for indigenous people under the Commonwealth Government's AEDP. Altman assesses, and provides data on, the demand for indigenous cultures as a tourism attraction. The proposition that indigenous cultures have a positive role in marketing Australia overseas has appeal but evidence of this is not conclusive. Northern Territory Tourism Commission data indicate that between 1987–92 less than 1 per cent of overseas visitors to the Northern Territory saw indigenous culture as the main attraction of their trip. In 1989–90 indigenous culture was the main interest for only 711 visitors. Recently the Commission has targeted 'niche' groups with some success. Like the supply side, the demand side of indigenous involvement in tourism has been imprecisely assessed. Aboriginal involvement has been in the manufacture and sale of indigenous art and material culture; small-scale and indigenous-run enterprises; the cultural tour; and as investors in localities like Kakadu National Park. Overseas visitors mainly utilise the indirect elements of indigenous culture. For example, museums rank above the more 'direct contact' bush tours in popularity. However, because of the paucity of data it is unclear if this is due to supply-side constraints. It appears that indigenous involvement in tourism is small-scale and vulnerable.
A number of paradoxes and dilemmas are faced by both the tourism industry and indigenous people, such as problems surrounding the need for, and supply of, indigenous cultural tourism. There are some successful ventures, which have all needed initial management support. Indigenous people often prefer indirect involvement in tourism, but it seems that the potential for this has been underestimated. This potential is indicated by the number of overseas visitors who wanted to visit museums and displays in 1991–92 (31 per cent) and to purchase crafts and artefacts (23 per cent).

The author states that to be effective, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Strategy must be policy-realistic. Tourism will not provide a panacea for Aboriginal economic disadvantage. Significant industry participation might only occur in the medium to longer-term, after product development, testing and marketing. Such a gradual approach might prove unpopular with policy makers, but is essential if sustainable Aboriginal involvement in tourism is to occur.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1994c; Altman, J.C. 1993a; Australian Science and Technology Council 1993; Department of Tourism 1994; Finlayson, J. 1993; Morony, R. 1993.


Available from Libraries.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Mabo, native title, property rights, land rights, resource rights, mineral resources – rights, economic development, royalties.

The economic policy issues emanating from the Mabo decision have much in common with existing Australian land rights law, in particular the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976. A wide spectrum of opinion, ranging from indigenous to mining interests, focuses on the ill-defined property rights which are a feature of statutory land rights in the Northern Territory. Examining the Northern Territory situation is useful in understanding the economic issues involved, and the pitfalls to be avoided; it also becomes clear that the Mabo decision did not impose uncertain property rights into a perfect world. Three fundamental questions considered in relation to native title are how much of Australia might be
held in future under native title, what resource rights native title will
confer, and what proportion of the indigenous population might benefit.

The economic dimensions of the Mabo decision are viewed from
three perspectives: microeconomic reform considerations, Federal/State
relations and links between economic policy and Aboriginal policy, and
land as a factor of production for indigenous Australians. Microeconomic
reform considerations focus on recommendations of the 1991 Industry
Commission inquiry, Mining and Mineral Processing in Australia,
including that traditional owners should own minerals on Aboriginal land
giving greater incentive to allow exploration and mining. Major issues will
be the extent to which negotiation rights operate as de facto mineral or
royalty rights, and the efficiency of the tribunal system in processing native
title claims, compensation claims and negotiations for commercial activity
on land held under native title. This will be crucial in the arena of
Federal/State relations and economic policy where the Commonwealth
must balance economic growth concerns with indigenous interests. While
the direct impact of statutory land and resource rights on the economic
status of indigenous Australians has been limited in the past, there is
special potential significance in exploration and possible mining in the
longer term. Issues here include the threat of Mabo-based litigation as
leverage in negotiations, appropriate institutional structures for effective
use of any surface disturbance compensation, and land management
options for native title land.

Economists have much to contribute to the economic and public
policy debates surrounding Aboriginal land rights and the consequences of
the Mabo decision with perspectives on rationality, optimally and first-best
policy responses.

Key cross-references
Altman, J.C. 1994a, 1994b; Commonwealth of Australia 1993a; Forbes,

ALTMAN J.C. 1994a. 'Implementing native title: economic lessons
from the Northern Territory', CAEPR Discussion Paper No. 64, Centre
for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), The Australian
National University, Canberra, 18pp.

Available from
CAEPR; S6.

Geographic area
Northern Territory.

Key words
Native title, mining, economic development, royalties, land councils.
This paper argues that leverage provided by the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* and the *Native Title Act 1993* has the capacity to facilitate regional development options for indigenous people. This potential is assessed by considering the economic lessons that can be learnt from the operations of the former Act over the past 17 years and the extent that these have been, and can be, incorporated into the latter Act. The institutional and legislative history of mining payments to Aboriginal people for the use of their land is outlined, and the operation of financial components of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* is evaluated. The incorporation of economic lessons from the Northern Territory into the *Native Title Act 1993* is considered and two mining agreements completed in the post-Mabo era are examined in this context. Native title implementation issues include the possible incorporation of a savings ratio in statute for the national land fund in order to establish a sustainable capital base; provision of resources needed to develop land purchased by the national land fund; and the need to carefully balance veto or negotiation rights as commercial leverage with wider perceptions of potential transactions and associated costs. The economic future for indigenous Australians lies in active indigenous participation in resource development; equity participation in resource development projects may demonstrate that, given real opportunities for participation, indigenous people will be pro-development.

**Key cross-references**


Available from CAEPR; $15.

**Geographic area**

Australia-wide.

**Key words**


In this chapter, Altman discusses the question of how much difference the *Native Title Act 1993* (NTA) will make to the economic status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. The complexities of State
and Territory land laws are outlined, the highly variable outcomes for indigenous freehold land ownership are provided in table format, and the areas of land that might be held under native title are assessed. The issue of property rights under native title, both in relation to trading land and resources on the land, raises the question of whether property rights are so ill-defined as to result in inefficiency and resource under-utilisation. Transaction costs associated with the potential development of land held under native title and the effectiveness of the institutional mechanisms proposed in the NTA are still largely unknown. It is suggested that for the majority of indigenous Australians any land benefit will not be linked to the NTA but to the compensatory social justice package being developed by the Commonwealth Government. The role of the National Land Fund in expanding the indigenous land base, the possible moneys allocated to it, and parallels with Northern Territory, and the Aboriginals Benefit Trust Account in particular, and New South Wales experiences are discussed. The problem of targeting compensatory resources to indigenous people who reside in major cities is identified as a major issue. For the majority of indigenous Australians economic improvement will occur through mainstream labour markets and the mainstream economy.

Altman states that there is little evidence in official statistics that land ownership increases the economic status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and some reasons for this are discussed. The Mt Todd Agreement is raised as an example of a mutually beneficial agreement between indigenous interests and miners that can occur outside the tribunal system when both parties are willing to negotiate. It is concluded that in some situations native title may provide a way forward but in others it will not, at least in terms of improved economic status.

**Key cross-references**


Available from Libraries.

**Geographic area**

Australia-wide.

**Key words**

Native title, National Land Fund, land rights, economic development, mining.
In examining economic implications of the *Native Title Act 1993* (NTA), this article focuses on three issues. First, the potential transfer of factor endowments in land to indigenous interests, or how much land might come under native title. This land has limited commercial value, except for its potential minerals worth, so mining and distribution of minerals rents assumes considerable importance. Second, property rights in minerals on native title: the compromise reached in the NTA between indigenous and mining interest groups over the right of veto over mining activity, seen by some as a de facto mineral right, is a negotiation right. Third, the issue of potential transaction costs under the new regulatory regime encompasses the debate over the relative merits of disjunctive (exploration only) and conjunctive (exploration and production) agreements.

Current statutory land rights law and contemporary indigenous land holdings demonstrate that existing laws have resulted in an unequal distribution of land. While this paper was written prior to the passing of the *ATSIC Amendment (Indigenous Land Corporation and Land Fund) Act 1995*, it foreshadows the possible financial operations of the National Land Fund and the resources earmarked for the purchase of land largely for indigenous Australians whose native title rights have been extinguished. The economic implications of the legislation are discussed. Positive aspects of the NTA for indigenous interests are the possible significant redistribution of land from the Crown to native title holders; a significant expansion of the land base for non-native title holders through the operation of the National Land Fund; and opportunities to utilise the leverage provided by the Mabo decision to extract concessions from mining companies on land that is either held, or might be held, under native title, as has occurred at Mt Todd in the Northern Territory. A danger for indigenous groups is a false impression that land alone will result in economic advancement; investment capital and human capital are also crucial. For miners, benefits of the NTA are certainty granted over existing leases and the framework for negotiating for exploration and mining. Where mining companies are willing to negotiate with indigenous interests, the apparent granting of commercial concessions can be turned to economic gain. In conclusion the author suggests that if economic principles, and in particular Coase's theory, had been more clearly understood and incorporated in the NTA, then a more workable regulatory framework and a more optimal allocation of resources would have occurred; however, the author notes political expediency and inefficient tradeoffs to accommodate various interest groups, rather than rational decision making, often influences policy formation.

**Key cross-references**


Available from
AIATSIS; $9.95.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Native title, economic development, National Land Fund, land acquisition, land management, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), royalties, mining.

The Native Title Act 1993 (NTA) provides at least three broad potential economic development avenues for indigenous Australians: through the payment of compensation if resource development occurs on land held under native title; by the potential to surrender native title either for financial return or in exchange for other freehold land; and through the operations of the Land Fund in acquiring land primarily for non-native title holders, although this paper was written prior to establishment of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Fund and the Indigenous Land Corporation. Each of these options has historical precedents in land rights law; this paper describes these precedents focusing on legislative frameworks, statutory requirements, expenditure, financial and investment policies and management processes.

Key issues associated with the effective utilisation of financial resources fall into three major areas. First, the nexus between commercial development on Aboriginal land and payment to native title holders and/or indigenous residents on that land, and whether it may be preferable to seek some royalty equivalent option in the NTA, rather than relying entirely on agreements or arbitration processes. Second, whether payments to traditional owners, and in the future native title holders, are considered public or private moneys with the suggestion that there be statutory stipulation of the purposes to which compensation moneys can be applied. Third, the operation of the Land Fund as the key means available in the NTA to expand the indigenous land base beyond those lands where native title has not been extinguished. These issues include the time frame over which these payments will be made, how resources might be quarantined, what investment ratio will be needed to generate sufficient accumulated reserves for a financially sustainable land acquisition fund, distribution of the resources, financial division between land acquisition and land management, and effective management of a growing land base. Aspects of
the operation of the three major land acquisition models are discussed: the Aboriginals Benefit Trust Account, the New South Wales *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*, and Commonwealth purchasing under the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission, the Aboriginal Development Commission and ATSIC. In conclusion, the author suggests that there will not be a Mabo-led economic recovery of the indigenous sector and that government needs to carefully consider the appropriate mechanisms to ensure that these first economic steps will be forwards rather than backwards.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*
CAEPR; $6.

**Geographic area**
Torres Strait.

**Key words**
Torres Strait, Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), marine strategy, resource rights, regional development, economic development, fisheries — comparison with New Zealand.

The TSRA, in stating its economic objectives for 1994–95, emphasised the creation of a sustainable regional economic base for the Torres Strait area, with particular emphasis on sea rights and ensuring that indigenous people living in Torres Strait have control over the use of resources and management of the environment. Initially, the paper describes the regulatory framework for managing marine resources in Torres Strait, the current value of the commercial fishing sector, and the potential for expansion of the industry. An assessment of Islander involvement in commercial fisheries covers barriers to participation, including current licensing arrangements which offer concessionary entry to Islanders and uneven distribution of population and fisheries resources across Torres Strait. Other barriers to Islander involvement include infrastructure requirements, particularly obtaining and maintaining freezer units; skill requirements to operate and maintain equipment and handle produce;
collateral and capital needs, which are a major barrier to entry to the prawn fishery; and the unattractiveness of lower profit commercial fisheries.

The broad options for increased participation in commercial fishing are for Islanders to participate more in fisheries that are currently operating below sustainable capacity, for Islanders to seek to enter fisheries where they are currently unrepresented or under-represented, and for Islanders to seek property rights in commercial fisheries. Strategies for the recognition of Islander property rights in marine resources are outlined: assertion of sovereignty; utilisation of potentially conflicting Torres Strait Treaty articles as leverage; appeal for Crown compensation; and active participation. These strategies for the distribution of property rights, which have parallels with Maori property rights in New Zealand fisheries, highlight the importance of strategic fisheries planning as part of the TSRA’s Torres Strait Development Plan and the urgent need for data on Islander effort and catch in fisheries.

Key cross references


Available from Libraries.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), employment, economic equality, equity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics.

This paper was prepared as a submission to the review of the AEDP which was completed early in 1994. The AEDP, launched in 1986–87, incorporated a commitment to undertake an independent review of the policy after an initial five-year phase to allow an assessment of its overall effectiveness in meeting the Commonwealth Government’s long-term objectives. A critical innovative feature of the AEDP is its overarching goal of attaining statistical employment equality between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians by the year 2000. This paper examines the nature of
labour force planning and goal setting in the AEDP Statement. It then re-examines a critique of the statistical targets made by demographers Tesfaghiorghis and Gray in 1991. Using 1991 Census data, the paper explores intercensal changes in the size and labour force status of the indigenous population.

This paper presents new projections of the indigenous population of working age to the year 2001, for consideration by the review committee, and reassesses the employment creation goals that will need to be set if statistical equality is to be achieved. It is estimated that the indigenous population of working age will exceed 200,000 by the year 2001 and that to achieve statistical equality, between 6,400 and 7,400 new jobs per annum will need to be created. Both figures represent over 10 per cent of the 1991 base employment of indigenous Australians and are impossible targets.

The paper highlights a number of statistical, methodological and conceptual issues that emanate from the new projections. In particular, it emphasises that insufficient statistical data are available to make accurate projections and that a more sophisticated analytical framework is required. At the macro level, it will be essential to match the supply of indigenous labour, in all its diversity, with regional demand. The paper concludes that, given the significant underestimation in initial AEDP goal-setting, the aim of statistical equality may be both inappropriate and destined to fail and that a notion of equity that recognises diversity of both circumstances and aspirations is needed.

Key cross-references


Available from
Out of print; available in libraries.

Geographic area
Coastal zone of Australia.

Key words
Coastal zone management, land rights, access to resources, native title.
The purpose of this consultancy was to assist the Coastal Zone Inquiry in its final Report by identifying practical options for involving indigenous people in the management of coastal zone resources focusing on a diversity of situations where development in the coastal zone had a documented impact on indigenous communities.

The terms of reference required the consultants to conduct a literature review; convene a workshop of experts; investigate information on institutional mechanisms available for indigenous involvement in coastal zone management regimes; and examine options for future involvement of indigenous people in coastal zone management via discussions with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. While the emphasis in the project was on the literature search, the researchers also utilised their past experience, as well as published and unpublished research material, and telephone interviews.

The Report divides the Australian coastal zone into State, Territory and Commonwealth jurisdictions. Chapters examine indigenous statutory rights to coastal zone resources, management regimes and case studies that focus on current and anticipated socioeconomic effects of coastal zone developments on indigenous communities and groups. The last chapter provides a synoptic overview of current coastal zone issues as they relate to indigenous interests and raises some options for future indigenous involvement in the management of Australia's coastal zone.

A major finding of the Report is that security of land tenure is the key leverage by which indigenous people can assert equal participation in coastal management, resource utilisation and development approval processes. Its presence or absence has led to inequalities between indigenous groups in their attempts to establish their coastal interests. At one end of the spectrum are those groups in the Northern Territory that have access to statutory mechanisms that can be used to support traditional systems of coastal and resource management, and to negotiate participation in commercial coastal developments. At the other end of the spectrum, indigenous groups in Tasmania experience severe limitations on controlling and using coastal resources because they have no land rights. The Mabo High Court decision has raised indigenous expectations of full involvement in coastal management regimes around Australia.

Key cross-references
The Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP) aims to achieve economic equality between indigenous and other Australians by the year 2000 through employment and income equality and commensurate levels of welfare dependence. Achieving employment equality, in statistical terms, for working-age indigenous Australians will require an increase in the employment rate from 27 per cent of those aged 15–64 years to 63 per cent. The relatively low labour force participation of indigenous Australians will require a simultaneous policy focus. In 1991, only 57 per cent of the working-age indigenous population was in the formal labour market compared with 71 per cent of the total population. The achievement of income equality will require an increase in mean annual individual income of over 50 per cent.

This paper addresses some issues which affect indigenous people in the labour market and possible options available to the union movement to assist in improving their performance in the formal labour market in accordance with broad AEDP goals. The focus is on how unions can assist in increasing formal employment and income levels for indigenous Australians. It is suggested that unions can have a role in working towards coverage of indigenous people. For example, ensuring that they are not discriminated against when they attempt to enter the labour market and acting vigilantly in award maintenance for employees of indigenous organisations. Unions can also attempt to ensure that an over segregated labour market does not develop and encourage indigenous participation in forming union objectives. Like governments, unions will need to find ways to assist those indigenous Australians who choose incorporation into the mainstream economy, while recognising that there are those who choose to stay outside the mainstream economy. The CDEP scheme embodies many of the dilemmas that the union movement will face in its interaction with the indigenous domain. On the one hand, the scheme provides only part-time employment for welfare entitlements; unless people move off the
scheme they are locked into poverty. On the other hand, any concerted attempt to ensure full award coverage for CDEP scheme participants would result in its decline. Such a development would jeopardise indigenous aspirants who wish to both participate in, and expand, the scheme.

**Key cross-references**

Daly, A.E. 1993a; Daly, A.E. and Hawke, A.E. 1994; Gregory, R.G. and Daly, A.E. 1994; Sanders, W. 1994b.


**Available from**
CAEPR; $6.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Socioeconomic status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) regions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

Altman and Liu Jin say that a major feature of ATSIC is its regional structure, currently consisting of 36 jurisdictions. The data and analysis in this paper were produced primarily for ATSIC regional councils for both regional planning and bottom-up resource-bidding purposes. This paper examines 1986 and 1991 Census data disaggregated to these 36 regional council levels, focuses on the three socioeconomic variables of employment, education and income and combines these variables to generate an Index of Socioeconomic Advantage (ISA). The Index is then used to divide regions into categories: least advantaged, less advantaged, more advantaged and most advantaged. However, it must be stressed that even the most advantaged regions in this analysis are only approaching the norm for non-indigenous Australians.

For 1986, the ISA categorised Papunya as the least advantaged region (with an Index score of 3.5) and Tasmanian Regional Aboriginal (with a score of 14) as the most advantaged. As a rule the relatively most advantaged areas are either in the more densely populated southeast or are regions that encompass a major capital city. An exception to this is Icarlrarnyiny Regional Council, that includes Perth, which falls into the less advantaged category. Conversely, the remote Torres Strait Regional Authority was in the most advantaged category. For 1991, the ISA ranged
from a low of 4.48 for Yapakurlangu in the Northern Territory to a high of 14.3 for Sydney. All regions with capital cities, except Icarlarnyiny, were in the most advantaged category. In 1991, there is a tendency for remote regions to be relatively worse off, especially in the central and western parts of the continent.

The authors also examine regional variations in the index between 1986 and 1991. A comparison of ISA scores indicates that, in absolute terms, some regional councils' scores declined. Miwatj declined by 3.2, Yilli Reung by 2.2 and Jabiru by 2.0. Major improvers were Papunya (1.6), Wongatha (1.5) and Cairns (1.5). The greatest stability is evident along the southeast seaboard, where nearly all regions remain most advantaged, and in central parts of the Northern Territory and Western Australia where all regions remain least advantaged. The authors see no ready explanations for change in the ISA between 1986 and 1991. They suggest that expansion of the CDEP scheme may have played a part, as some regions with rapid CDEP scheme growth increased their ISA score. The change in CDEP scheme participation by region correlates both with change in employment/population ratios and change in ISA scores. Some potential policy issues are considered, including the negative and positive aspects of relying on census data for planning purposes. Areas for further research are outlined, indicating not only the changes needed to augment the current database, but also some needs of regional councils for preparing their regional development plan.

Key cross-references


Available from
SPRC; $9.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.
Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), government policy, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, indigenous autonomy, employment, income.

The concept of indigenous 'losers' is critically examined in the light of the considerable cultural, economic and geographic variation within the Aboriginal population. It is also pointed out that the current level of indigenous disadvantage also reflects complex historical processes.

Altman and Smith suggest that the extent to which social policy should foster economic adaptation and compensate the 'losers' from economic forces is of growing concern to policy makers in the 1990s. From an Aboriginal policy perspective this concern is familiar. The recent endemic levels of unemployment experienced by the non-Aboriginal population have been a long-term experience for indigenous Australians. The paper examines ATSIC's CDEP scheme, which offers sufficient flexibility to target particular sectional groups of the long-term unemployed. The CDEP scheme, a community-focused, labour market program, is investigated both for its ability to compensate disadvantaged indigenous Australians and its applicability in the wider community. Currently 22,000 indigenous Australians residing in over 200 localities participate in the scheme. In the 1992-93 financial year, ATSIC allocated $235 million to the scheme, with 75 per cent consisting of notional offsets against the welfare entitlements of participants.

The CDEP scheme is a community-oriented approach which offers a potentially radical economic adaptation; the most significant aspect being the 'Aboriginalisation' of work and the high degree of local control over setting employment outcomes and work schedules. However, the longer-term employment and income improvement outcomes from the scheme are not clear. While the scheme represents an economic adjustment which may appease policy makers concerned with officially-defined unemployment, and is supported by participating communities welcoming greater local control, the CDEP scheme does seem particularly effective in reducing poverty, as measured by the census. This is because welfare-linked fiscal ceilings limit the ability of the participants to break out of poverty, and in some regions it may perpetuate an employment enclave of disadvantaged people. It remains unclear whether the scheme has the capacity to compensate especially disadvantaged individuals at the community level, or to move unemployed indigenous Australians into the labour market and towards equality with other Australians. The scheme appears to suit the particular circumstances of many indigenous Australians, but any moves to centrally target policies and programs at economic 'losers', whether long-term unemployed or residing in regions that have been affected by recession, should be made with caution.

Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Western Arnhem Land, Northern Territory.

Key words
Mining - resource development, economic impacts, royalties, land rights, self-determination, native title.

This paper presents the results of a consultancy undertaken for the Northern Land Council (NLC) on the economic impacts of the payment of mining moneys with respect to the Nabarlek uranium mine in Western Arnhem Land, which is now closed. The focus of the research is on the operations of the Nabarlek Traditional Owners Association (NTOA), which was established in 1988. However, the contemporary emphasis of the paper is contextualised with reference to the complex historical, legislative and sociopolitical legacies that have influenced the Association's performance.

If mining moneys were intended as a compensation for the adverse social and cultural impacts of the Nabarlek mine, or to establish an economic base from which to generate continuing income after the cessation of the mine it is clear that this has not occurred. Thus, in terms of regional economic development, and the establishment of a long-term economic base for the affected indigenous people, NTOA has been unsuccessful.

The authors point out that there is always a tension, especially for disadvantaged people, between current expenditure and investment for the future. Nabarlek mining moneys tended to be distributed on a regional basis either as vehicles or cash, a pattern difficult to break despite attempts to do so. The experience of NTOA suggests that it would be preferable to have a statutory stipulation outlining the uses to which compensation moneys can be applied. Altman and Smith say that the NLC as well as the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments have a responsibility for monitoring the performance of royalty associations. However, the Commonwealth's policy of self-determination prevented them taking an active role in NTOA affairs. Also, the Queensland Mines Limited
Agreement's shortcomings, regional politicking, early inadequate management and poor financial advice have seriously hampered effective control of Association affairs by its membership. It is questionable whether members have ever been able to assert financial self-determination.

It is instructive to consider what lessons can be learnt for the future from this case study, especially as the Nabarlek mine is the first major resource development project in the post-land rights era to close. The passage of the *Native Title Act 1993*, and the potential for the payment of agreement moneys to native title holders with respect to commercial development of their land, enhances the significance of the research findings and recommendations in this paper.

*Key cross-references*


*Available from*
CAEPR; $6.

*Geographic area*
Australia-wide.

*Key words*
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment, equality, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics.

In 1987, the AEDP estimated that two-thirds of the employment growth necessary to achieve statistical equality for indigenous Australians in the mainstream labour market could be met through increased opportunities in the private sector. Private sector employment is here defined as those economic activities that do not depend primarily on government funding. Using census data, two methods are employed to estimate change in the number of indigenous people employed in the private sector between 1986 and 1991. The first uses a mix of census statistics and administrative data sets. The second is based on scrutiny of industry tables from the census, cross-classified by private sector employment. Revised statistical limits of indigenous employment in the private sector are produced with intercensal
growth substantially deflated. The analysis indicates that indigenous employment in the private sector is substantially lower than indicated by census data.

An issue raised by the authors is to what extent such private sector employment is evenly distributed Australia-wide. The main policy hurdle faced by government in accessing private sector employment stems from location, as around half of the indigenous population resides in regions that lack vibrant economies. Reliance on the public sector for employment is increasingly widespread in remote Australia, with a growing dependence on the CDEP scheme. In such locations private sector employment cannot be generated without substantial government subvention. It is suggested that if such arrangements are not to become entrenched then programs will need to achieve a higher rate of success in establishing commercially viable enterprises which are free of government subvention, than has been evident in indigenous communities to date. The question of whether equality is an appropriate yardstick against which to measure the enhancement of indigenous employment status is broached. The authors suggest that if such equality were to exist, it could be interpreted as a transfer of employment into activities which may be perceived as assimilationist.

Altman and Taylor say that a more balanced distribution of employment by industry sector would require a much greater involvement of indigenous people in mainstream labour markets and a population distribution that is skewed in favour of major cities. Given that such a balance would require substantial labour migration, the authors ask whether such an outcome would be either feasible or desirable.

Key cross-references


*Available from* CAEPR; S6.

*Geographic area* Torres Strait.
Key words
Torres Strait Islander statistics, Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), economic status, population change, labour force status, education, income, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

This paper examines indigenous socioeconomic change in Torres Strait using data from the censuses and from relevant primary research. The analysis focuses on change in population, labour force status, education and training, and income. Change is identified in several areas and policy implications are discussed, with particular attention given to the high levels of population growth within the outer islands of the Strait, and the continuing dependency of the area on government transfers and the CDEP scheme. Apparent substantial improvements in aspects of indigenous labour force status are qualified with respect to the expansion of the CDEP scheme between censuses; raising the questions of whether the CDEP scheme is preparing people for full-time employment, and whether sufficient full-time employment is available in the Torres Strait area.

A major purpose of the analysis is to inform the TSRA, which replaced the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Regional Commission regional council for Torres Strait in July 1994. The TSRA's role includes formulating and monitoring policies and one of its primary aims is the creation of a sustainable economic base for the region. In this context the TSRA is responsible for preparing a Torres Strait Development Plan. It is noted that while further analysis of census data would be useful, census-based analyses alone will not be sufficient to assist the TSRA to meet all of its development planning goals. Research carried out in 1989–90 provided base-line data on the regional economy; a comparison of this work with new primary research could provide an additional measure of change in the TSRA over the last five years and include relevant data such as estimates of indigenous involvement in agriculture and fisheries.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR: S6.


Geographic area
Torres Strait.

Key words
Torres Strait Islander statistics, Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), economic status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population - change, labour force status, employment, education, income, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

Approximately 80 per cent of Torres Strait Islanders live on the Australian mainland, away from Torres Strait, creating two different social and economic environments for the population. In the Strait and on the tip of Cape York, Torres Strait Islanders live mainly in small communities, have limited job opportunities and depend largely on employment creation schemes. Islanders on the mainland are dispersed throughout the general population in urban centres and have access to a wider range of employment and other opportunities. This paper compares the economic status of Torres Strait Islanders in these two settings with that of all Australians using census data on population, labour force status, education and training, and income.

This research indicates that two very different labour markets exist. To date, however, discussion of the economic status of Torres Strait Islanders has considered the population as a single group and situated that single economic group between the relatively low status of the Aboriginal population and the relatively high status of the non-indigenous population. While the statistics indicate that the labour force status of Torres Strait Islanders in the Torres Strait is superior to that of those on the mainland, this is due largely to the employment effects of the CDEP scheme. If CDEP scheme participants in the Torres Strait are discounted from census employment statistics then Torres Strait Islanders on the mainland have considerably higher economic status than those in the Strait. Viewed overall, Torres Strait Islanders on the mainland occupy a position of intermediate economic status between that of their counterparts in the Torres Strait and that of Australians in general.

The implications of this ranking are discussed, including efforts to enhance the economic status of Torres Strait Islanders residing in the TSRA area, explanations of why Torres Strait Islanders have left the Torres Strait and support for regionalising Torres Strait Islander affairs. Finally, the granting of native title and increasing Torres Strait Islander control over economic resources creates the potential for increased involvement in private sector developments, especially in activities related to commercial fishing and tourism.

Key cross references
Aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural expression have not been protected by law which has lead to unacceptable exploitation of indigenous works. For example, the souvenir industry produces reproductions, or purported reproductions, of indigenous designs and other objects for the tourist market. The paper seeks options for addressing the limitations of the present (1968) Copyright Act which provides the same protection for indigenous cultural expression as for other Australian cultural expression. A problem in relation to the present Act is that while joint authorship of a work is recognised, collective ownership by reference to any other criterion, for example, membership of a community whose customary laws invest the community with ownership of any creation of its members, is not recognised. Other problems include the requirement of a material form, which prevents copyright from subsisting in oral storytelling, dance and song; sacred-secret material is not specially protected as such; and the term of protection, which is usually the author's life plus 50 years, prevents copyright applying to rock art traditional indigenous designs.

The Commonwealth Government recognises that indigenous cultural expression requires different and more appropriate legislative protection. This paper suggests options for consideration. These include amending the Copyright Act to address its limitations. However, there are difficulties in framing such legislation so as to make it a practical scheme. For example, if there was no requirement of a material form, proof of the existence and nature of the work would be difficult; identification of the membership of a group claiming collective ownership of a work would be another. Also suggested are amendments to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act to provide indigenous communities with a right of action to protect artistic works of traditional significance, with no limit on the term of protection and no requirement for a material form. The aim is to introduce new, more protective, legislation to Parliament in 1995. To combat proliferation of articles that falsely represent indigenous origin, the
Arts Management Association is currently developing a certified trade mark to help consumers identify authentic works.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1994c; Altman, J.C. 1993b; Daly, A.E 1993b.


Available from
ABS; $25.

Geographic area
Northern Territory.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, remote locations.

The book presents a comprehensive statistical description of the social and economic, as well as the demographic structure of the Northern Territory. A total of 39,910 people identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in the 1991 Census of the Northern Territory. Around 15 per cent of all of Australia's indigenous people live here. About half of all indigenous people in the Northern Territory are under 20 years of age while only 29 per cent of the remainder of the population are in this age bracket.

The ratio of dependent persons per 100 indigenous people of working age (those aged 15–64 years) is 71.6, while for the remainder the ratio is 38.5. Therefore, for every Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person of working age there are twice as many persons of dependent age. The age structure of indigenous people in the Northern Territory is indicative of a population with high birthrates, but with low life expectancy. There is evidence of a steady decline in the proportion of indigenous people in each age group after the age of 24 years. This decline is not evident in the non-indigenous population until the 45–49 age group.

The 1991 Census revealed that only 30 per cent of the Territory's indigenous people live in urban areas while 74 per cent of the remaining population are urban dwellers. This contrast reflects the variation in employment opportunities, way of life and social structure that is generally evident between the two groups. While this ABS monograph provides some useful statistics, it provides limited analysis and should be read in conjunction with Taylor, J. 1994c.
Key cross-references


Available from
ABS; $20.

Geographic area
Western Australia.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, labour force status, labour force participation, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment, education.

At the 1991 Census 41,779 indigenous people were counted in Western Australia; the population increased by 11 per cent from 1986. Sixty-one per cent of indigenous people were below the age of 25 years, compared with 39 per cent for the total population. Low numbers of Aboriginal students completed secondary school, with indigenous girls remaining longer in school than boys. Most qualified indigenous people were aged between 25 and 34 years.

The 1991 Census shows a labour force participation rate of 47 per cent; this varied according to location, from 50 per cent in major urban areas to 42 per cent in other urban areas. Indigenous unemployment has decreased from 39 per cent to 36 per cent since 1986. Forty-nine per cent of indigenous people stated that they were not in the labour force (not employed and not looking for work), 35 per cent of whom were located in rural areas where employment opportunities are limited. The CDEP scheme may impact on the labour force status of indigenous people. The scheme is based on the agreement of community members to pool their unemployment benefits; community councils then manage the fund, provide part-time employment and set wages.

Most indigenous people were employed in the private sector compared with 72 per cent of those employed in the total population. Over 36 per cent of indigenous people were employed in the government sector. The main industry of employment was community services (42 per cent) and the main occupation was labouring. Over 60 per cent of employed indigenous people were males. Community services accounted for 52 per cent of the females employed. More than 80 per cent of qualified indigenous people were employed compared with 91 per cent for the total population. Three out of four unemployed indigenous people left school
before the age of 17 years; lack of schooling was a more significant factor amongst unemployed indigenous people as age increased.

A comparison between urban and non-urban areas indicates that households generally had lower incomes in non-urban areas than urban areas. Forty-four per cent of indigenous people received less than $155 per week compared with 31 per cent of the total population. Employed indigenous males earned more than employed indigenous females. The book is largely descriptive and should be read in conjunction with Taylor, J. and Roach L.M. 1994e.

**Key cross-references**

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS (ABS) 1993c. Census Data Quality: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Counts, Census Working Paper No. 6, ABS, Canberra, 40pp.**

*Available from*
ABS; free publication.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, self-identification, urban locations.

There was an increase of 16.6 per cent in the count of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population between the 1986 and 1991 Censuses. This increase was greater for Torres Strait Islander people than for Aboriginal people (24.8 per cent compared to 15.8 per cent). The report examined a number of factors that might have contributed to the overall increase in the indigenous population.

There is no indication of any significant increase in response to the Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander origin question in the 1991 Census. Overall the rate of undercount of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population appeared to decrease between 1986 and 1991, although other analysis indicated that this might not be the case for all age/sex groups and states. In addition, the population counted on Remote Area Interview Forms could have been subject to slight overcounting. The fertility rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women has traditionally been much higher than for the non-indigenous population and natural increase would have contributed to the increase in counts between 1986 and 1991. The increase in the indigenous population in the Australian Capital Territory
appears to be largely explained by internal migration, but this was, at most, a minor factor in the increases in other States and the Northern Territory counts. The increase in the counts of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations between 1986 and 1991 appears to be greater than could be explained by these factors, however, particularly for Torres Strait Islander people. Other factors may also have affected the counts, such as an increase in the propensity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to identify themselves as such in the census.

Other interesting points in the 1991 Census were shifts in the distribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards the major urban centres of New South Wales and Victoria where the largest intercensal increases were recorded; and undercounting, which appeared to occur in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15–29 years, particularly for males.

Key cross-references

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS (ABS) 1993d. 1991 Census – Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population, cat. no. 2740.0, ABS, Canberra, 42pp.

Available from
Out of print; available in libraries.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) regions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, education, employment, unemployment, income, housing.

This report presents a summary of the 1991 Census data relating to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. Comparisons are made between States and Territories, between the 36 ATSIC regions and with the non-indigenous population. An appendix provides a range of social indicators. The publication complements data to be produced from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey conducted in 1994.

The book reveals that 28 per cent of the indigenous population lived in capital cities and just under 20 per cent in rural and remote areas, with 50 per cent in towns and rural localities. There were differences in the age
structure of the indigenous and non-indigenous populations. Of the total indigenous population, almost 40 per cent were children under 15 years and almost 15 per cent were under five years. These figures compare with 22 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively, for the non-indigenous population. The demographic characteristics of Torres Strait Islanders were very similar to those of Aboriginal people. Torres Strait Islanders were on average slightly older with 3.6 per cent aged over 65 years compared with 2.3 of the Aboriginal population. There was also a smaller proportion under 15 years; with 38 per cent of Torres Strait Islanders compared with 40 per cent of Aboriginals in this age range.

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dwellings which were rented was 64 per cent, compared with 25 per cent for the non-indigenous population. Over 40 per cent of indigenous people had left school by age 16 compared with 36 per cent of non-indigenous people. Indigenous people had lower levels of educational attainment; almost 80 per cent aged 15 years and over had no post-secondary school educational qualification, compared with 61 per cent of the non-indigenous population. There are large differences in the levels of employment between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. Over 53 per cent of indigenous people aged 15 years and over participated in the labour force compared with 63 per cent of non-indigenous people. Unemployment amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was three times higher than for non-indigenous people at the time of the Census. There were differences in the unemployment rates between States. The rate ranged from 19 per cent in the Australian Capital Territory to over 36 per cent in Western Australia. Proportionally more indigenous people than non-indigenous people were employed in the government sector. Indigenous people were more likely to be employed in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations than non-indigenous people. Almost 63.5 per cent of indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over reported an income of under $12,000 per year. This compared with 45 per cent of non-indigenous Australians.

Key cross-references


Available from
Demography Section, ABS; free publication.
Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population - change, employment, unemployment, education, rural areas, urban areas.

According to this analysis of the 1991 Census the total fertility rate of indigenous women in Australia was about 3.1 children per woman, or about 40 per cent higher than the rate of 1.9 children for the total female population of Australia. (The fertility rate is the average number of children a woman would expect to bear by the end of her reproductive lifespan, if she were to bear children at each age throughout her lifetime according to the prevailing set of age-specific fertility rates.) There were wide differentials in the fertility rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women according to State of usual residence. The lowest total fertility rates were recorded for Victoria (0.3), Tasmania (2.6) and the Australian Capital Territory (2.6), whilst the highest were recorded for Queensland (3.2), Western Australia (3.3) and the Northern Territory (3.4).

Differentials in fertility according to level of education, labour force status as well as section-of-State were observed. Women who did not go to school had a total fertility rate of 3.1 children. This increased slightly to 3.2 for women who left school at the age of 14 years or younger and for those who left school between the ages of 15 and 17. The total fertility rate then declined to 2.9 children for women who stayed at school until age 18 years or older. Thus, although fertility declined with an increase in the age the woman left school, the fertility decline was not linear. Fertility tended to increase slightly with an increase in the age a woman left school, until age 18 years or more, when fertility started to decline.

The study found that the fertility of indigenous women was inversely related to their labour force participation. The more a woman participated in the labour force, the lower her fertility. The total fertility rate was 3.3 for women not in the labour force, which fell slightly to 3.2 for women in the labour force but unemployed, and declined further to 2.7 for women who were employed. The fertility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women was higher in rural than major urban and other urban areas. Women in major urban areas had a total fertility rate of 2.8, compared to 3.1 for women in other urban areas, and 3.2 for women in rural areas.

Key cross-references
This publication presents a descriptive summary of 1991 Census data about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of South Australia. The indigenous population was 16,232 (an increase of 13.6 per cent since 1986), of which 10 per cent were Torres Strait Islanders. Indigenous people represented 1.2 per cent of the total State population; 43 per cent lived in Adelaide. The proportion of indigenous people under 15 years of age was 39 per cent compared with 21 per cent of the non-indigenous population. Only 7 per cent of the non-indigenous population were aged under five years, compared with 14.5 per cent of indigenous people.

In education, a substantially lower proportion (19 per cent) of indigenous people compared to non-indigenous people (almost 30 per cent) had left school at aged 17 years and over. Only 12 per cent of indigenous people aged between 15 and 24 years were attending a post-secondary educational institution, compared with 20 per cent of non-indigenous people in this age group. The level of educational attainment of indigenous people aged 15 years and over was lower than that of non-indigenous people: only 21.3 per cent had post-secondary school qualifications, compared with 36 per cent of non-indigenous people.

The unemployment rate for indigenous people aged 15 years and over was 28.5 per cent compared with 11.6 per cent for the non-indigenous population. The labour force participation rate for indigenous people was lower than for non-indigenous people: 55.4 per cent compared with almost 63 per cent. Females had a lower participation rate than males.

The majority of people in South Australia were employed in the private sector, however a greater proportion of indigenous people were employed by the government sectors. Over 47.5 per cent of employed indigenous people worked in community services, which was more than twice the proportion of non-indigenous people employed in this area. Nearly one-quarter of employed indigenous people were labourers and related workers, compared to 14 per cent of non-indigenous people. Proportionally fewer indigenous people were in the managers,
administrators or professional categories, although the differences were less marked in South Australia than at the national level.

Nearly two-thirds (63.6 per cent) of indigenous people aged 15 years and over had an income of $12,000 or less per year in 1991 compared with less than half of non-indigenous people. Only 7.8 per cent of indigenous people earned over $25,000 a year while 21.3 per cent of non-indigenous people were included in this category. The majority of indigenous persons in South Australia earned $16,000 or less per year. While this ABS monograph provides some useful statistics, it provides limited analysis and should be read in conjunction with Taylor, J. and Roach, L.M. 1994d.

Key cross-references


Available from
Australian Housing Research Council; $8.95.

Geographic area
Nguiu, Ngukurr, Angurugu, Ali Curong and Amoonga communities, Northern Territory.

Key words
Housing, funding, economic development, self-management, self-reliance, training, disadvantage.

Government reports have highlighted the need to help communities to manage their housing programs. A three year pilot program was conducted by the Northern Territory Department of Lands, Housing and Local Government, commencing in 1992. The aim was to establish good housing management practices in five pilot communities: Nguiu, Ngukurr, Angurugu, Ali Curong and Amoonga. As a component of the program, the Department identified training needs and developed training programs. To undertake this aspect of the program, councillors, health staff, educators and maintenance staff at communities were interviewed to assess conditions concerning housing delivery and management training, and a previously conducted housing conditions survey was utilised. The report concludes that substantial funding is required to provide sufficient housing services to overcome current problems. In the Northern Territory 1,200 dwellings were constructed between 1987 and 1991. Many of these were
deteriorating because of lack of maintenance, overcrowding and faulty construction. Over 50 per cent of housing in the pilot communities required major restoration. Indigenous families in remote communities have little choice of house size, design, or its location.

Community councils have many functions making them increasingly reliant on outsiders to provide community development. This has resulted in decreasing community involvement in all aspects of housing. Few indigenous people are involved in housing design, planning, or post-occupancy management. Housing management is related to the availability of trained people and to the support of housing management structures in the community. The report points out that if housing delivery and management remains with outside administrative systems, then housing management will probably remain outside the concerns of the community.

Three training programs are proposed in the report: the housing policy development program is an education and skills development program designed to assist councils in their housing management activities; the housing officer training program is a community development and administrative management skills program; and the tenants support program is a development education program directed at strengthening the linkages between community managers and tenants.

Key cross-references


Available from
Commonwealth Government Bookshops; $4.95.

Geographic area
Northern Australia.

Key words
Employment, training, education, health, tourism, mining, pastoralism, enterprises, government policy, research, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), native title.

The report reviews research and development activities relevant to tropical Australia, and identifies opportunities for further research, development and technologies for the next decade. A chapter is devoted to the needs of
indigenous people, who make up 10 per cent of the total population of northern Australia. The focus of many indigenous communities has been to obtain ownership, or control, of their traditional land, much of which is degraded. Indigenous people do not have resources to deal with this, thus restoration of such land is a major research problem. ATSIC is developing strategies for indigenous involvement in the pastoral industry. The recognition by the High Court, in 1992, of native title to land is of wide-ranging significance. The decision has increased uncertainty about land access by mining, pastoral and tourist industries. It is essential that the implications of the decision be analysed and resolved.

Indigenous people in the Northern Territory have average incomes which are less than half of those of other Australians. Estimates show that the share of indigenous youth located in remote rural areas will rise from 59 per cent in 1991 to 75 per cent by 2001. Thus, access to education, employment and training will be increasingly be necessary for those in remote locations. Mining companies have developed indigenous employment programs, but studies question the prospects for indigenous people gaining employment in mining, as in the last ten years the proportion of indigenous people employed there has declined. ATSIC is developing comprehensive strategies for indigenous involvement in arts, crafts and tourism. There has been little assessment of the aspirations of indigenous youth to participate in the tourism and mining industries. The production, for sale, of arts and crafts provides an alternative option to direct participation in tourism as does the provision of ancillary services to the mining industry. The Report suggests that these matters be examined.

Key cross-references


Available from
Faculty of Law, NTU; $25.

Geographic area
Australia-wide, with emphasis on coastal regions.

Key words
Native title, sea rights, fishing, access to resources, coastal resource use.
In the Mabo decision, the High Court gave effect to the common law acceptance of indigenous rights to land. The paper examines the thesis that Mabo extends to the sea. It considers the application of the rationale of native title at common law to the sea. It outlines jurisprudence in the United States, Canada and New Zealand which include sea rights as part of indigenous title legislation. Native title in Australia is based on traditional connection, occupation or use at the time of settlement. The author argues that if indigenous people can establish a traditional connection with the sea at the time of Crown sovereignty, and the maintenance of the connection today, a claim of native title should be sustained.

According to Bartlett, Australian governments and institutions seem to have accepted that Mabo extends to the sea. For example, the Northern Territory (Confirmation of Titles to Land) Act 1993 requests the Commonwealth to pass legislation to give effect to any right of interest granted by the Crown over coastal waters and to extinguish native title to that extent; the Commonwealth Government has alluded to Mabo in relation to difficulties presented by international law issues; and the Chamber of Mines and Energy of Western Australia has recognised that native title may extend to foreshore and off-shore areas.

**Key cross-references**


Available from
GBRMPA; $16.50.

**Geographic area**
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Queensland.

**Key words**
Native title, sea rights, access to resources, self-determination, self-management, participation in policy development.

The GBRMPA is responsible for the care and development of a multiple use marine park within the Great Barrier Reef region. The object of the park is conservation. In drawing up zoning and management plans the GBRMPA must take into account all existing uses. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have identified themselves as traditional owners or as having historical use rights to maritime estates within the park. The
consultancy considers how indigenous interests may be incorporated in the marine park. The terms of reference required analysis of legal and political trends in Australia and overseas with respect to recognition of the rights of indigenous people to marine resources and to assess the implications for GBRMPA. The High Court’s Mabo decision has raised the expectations of indigenous groups for recognition of marine estates. The consultants were also required to examine the recommendations presented to the GBRMPA from previous commissioned research, workshop proceedings and Marine Park Authority decisions; recommend action which GBRMPA could take with respect to indigenous interests to comply with government policy, statutory requirements and State/Commonwealth division of powers; and take into account the effects on other park users of current indigenous practices with respect to traditional hunting and fishing, endangered species legislation, establishment of co-management strategies and indigenous management zones.

The Report’s recommendations included that: the GBRMPA should recognise traditional ownership and responsibility for marine estates and their resources by developing effective co-management arrangements; there be indigenous representation on the consultative committee; consideration should be made to the establishment of a separate indigenous consultative committee; and, as recommended by previous consultant’s reports, Aboriginal communities should be involved in joint management strategies using community rangers and be directly consulted on marine resource use and management. The Report also argues that there should be formal recognition in the appropriate Act to recognise maritime clan boundaries in zoning and management plans; that the GBRMPA keep abreast with trends in indigenous claims for off-shore national parks; and the GBRMPA should undertake a collaborative research program with indigenous consultation and support.

Key cross-references


Available from
Faculty of Law, NTU; S25.

Geographic area
Northern Territory.
Key words
National parks – ownership, management; access to resources; sea rights, native title, self-management, fishing.

Billyard uses Cobourg Marine Park on the Cobourg Peninsula as an example of how zoning and other provisions can satisfy the aims of marine conservation as well as provide solutions to the concerns of indigenous owners. Planning for the marine park is progressing, with the Conservation Commission preparing a draft Plan of Management and the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries preparing a Fisheries Management Plan.

During the discussion surrounding the declaration of the marine park, concern was expressed by local Aboriginal people regarding: their inability to control access to culturally significant sites in the marine environment; the depletion of traditional food sources by commercial fishing, particularly by trawlers; and the wastage of fish resources from trawling. The traditional owners have made it clear that they wish to participate in control of the marine park and its natural resources.

Traditional owners have been involved, along with members of the public, in the establishment and management of the marine park through a consultative process. Another option for more directly involving indigenous people would be by enhancing the management role of the Cobourg Peninsula Sanctuary Board. This board manages the park and has an indigenous majority vote (it also runs the adjoining terrestrial national park, the Gurig National Park). Enhancement of the management role of the board would elevate the involvement of traditional owners in the planning and management of the park. In addition, to ensure indigenous people’s access to marine resources it is proposed to tailor the park’s existing conservation zones to meet the needs of indigenous people, including the creation of some zoning which restricts access to exclusive use for indigenous people. Other management provisions under consideration include cooperative management of traditional resources combining western resource management techniques with traditional knowledge and skills, employment of local indigenous people as rangers and encouragement to undertake appropriate tourism ventures.

The Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory has commenced a project which seeks to systematically identify areas for future marine protected areas. This reflects a movement towards a national representative system of marine protected areas. In planning these projects the Conservation Commission is aware that indigenous people currently own 72 per cent of the Northern Territory coastline, with title extending to the low water mark. It is thus readily apparent that if a system of marine protected areas is to be developed, close consultation and the involvement of indigenous people will be necessary.
Key cross-references


Available from
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies; $34.95.

Geographic area
Australia-wide, but mainly Northern and Central Australia.

Key words
Hunting and gathering, indigenous foods, nutrition.

The authors organised the collection and laboratory analysis of the nutrient value of 'bush tucker', including vegetables, fruits, animal and insect foods. The study was undertaken to redress the fact that the foods eaten by indigenous Australians had never been listed in Australian food composition tables. The food tables provided in the book also include a collation of most of the other published and unpublished data on the nutrient content of Australia's indigenous foods; over 500 different native foods have been included. Information gathered from indigenous people on edibility and preparation of foods is also given. The book does not, however, represent a complete list of the foods available to indigenous Australians. The foods of Central and Northern Australia are better represented in the tables than foods native to the southern parts of Australia.

According to the authors the major use of these tables is in the calculation of nutrients from records for undertaking food intake studies. One of the barriers to interpreting such studies has been the lack of food composition data for those living traditional and semi-traditional lifestyles. The book forms a timely record, as many Australian plant species and knowledge of how they were prepared are diminishing.

Key cross-references

*Available from*  
Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; free publication.

*Geographic area*  
Australia-wide.

*Key words*  
Self-determination, self-management, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), regional councils, regional planning, regional agreements.

Self-determination is a central concept of Federal Government policy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs. The author briefly investigates indigenous self-determination in relation to international law; the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC); community and regional planning; indigenous self-government; and regional planning and regional agreements.

Under Federal Government policy ATSIC is central to indigenous self-determination. It administers Commonwealth programs for indigenous peoples. ATSIC operates through a devolved system of regional councils who elect Commissioners to the ATSIC Board. The author suggests that although ATSIC is an important milestone towards empowerment of indigenous peoples, it is still some way from being an effective representative body. There is tension between ATSIC's objective of empowering indigenous people towards self-determination and its role as a Commonwealth-funded statutory authority conforming to a bureaucratic program-centred concept of management and accountability rather than to indigenous organisational development. ATSIC's staff are employees of the Australian Public Service, and are thus accountable to the Federal bureaucracy, not the elected indigenous representatives. This raises the question of the extent to which policy development in ATSIC is driven by communities through their elected representatives, or by bureaucratic agendas. Some indigenous Australians have questioned whether ATSIC represents a move towards self-determination.

Since, in Australia, self-determination for indigenous peoples means being able to choose the relationships they have with governments, Brennan looks at ways in which communities can decide their own futures. Torres Strait Islanders are setting the pace for a form of indigenous self-government within the Australian federation with a new body, the Torres
Strait Regional Authority (operating within the framework of the ATSIC Act) and a development plan setting a regional vision.

Another aspect of self-determination outlined by Brennan is negotiated regional agreements, referred to in the Native Title Act 1993. Some regional agreements have been negotiated between governments, commercial interests and indigenous peoples. The author suggests that the scope and number of these will increase in the future. These agreements have variable legal bases. Examples can be found in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, the Mitchell River delta and Torres Strait. The Kimberley Land Council is developing its preferences for a negotiated regional agreement in relation to control of certain areas of land. One of the advantages of negotiated regional agreements is the potential for co-management of cultural and natural resources.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $15.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Mabo, native title, property rights, National Native Title Tribunal.

The High Court in the Mabo decision accepted that traditional rights and interests in land could be varied within a group according to traditional law over time. A key issue for legislators considering a registration and claims system of native title is whether the described Aboriginal rights and interests in land are simply rights and interests to have some access and use of land or whether these rights are private ownership rights. Brennan examines aspects of the Mabo proceedings closely, especially whether land was held under communal or individual native title. The decision that Meriam people as a group held rights and interests in land as determined by the local system of law and custom was not the equivalent of freehold title.

Brennan makes detailed reference to the situation in Western Australia, where the Court Government's legislation extinguishes all native
title rights and replaces such rights with 'rights of traditional usage', more akin to permissive occupancy than native title. The author concludes that what is crucial to the implementation of native title is a universal claims and registration system which can be exercised by native title holders; this is essential if the property rights of indigenous communities are to be sufficiently protected while guaranteeing the certainty required by developers seeking foreign investment.

**Key cross-references**


**Available from**
Libraries.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), disadvantage, government programs.

According to the author, there is little evidence that Australia is solving the problems of indigenous disadvantage, despite ameliorative government programs. Thus, Brunton says, one must ask whether an unwillingness to confront certain possibilities has precluded informed public debate about whether the thrust of policies relating to indigenous people has been misconceived. This paper discusses such issues, suggesting that conventionally accepted explanations of indigenous disadvantage are fallacies, and then outlining an alternative approach. The article makes its case by focusing on the National Report of the RCIADIC, because of its importance in legitimising particular current courses of action. The inconsistencies, questionable assumptions, stereotypes and silences of the Report reflect the problem, according to the author.

Brunton suggests that without denying the grave injustices that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have suffered in the past, continuing portrayal of indigenous disadvantage in terms of 'institutional racism', which has a major role in the Report and much other commentary, is bogus. Consideration must be given to whether aspects of indigenous cultures are really compatible with the goals of overcoming disadvantage. It is also necessary to recognise that the 'protectionism' and 'assimilation',
so denounced in the policies of the past and invoked as a cause of contemporary problems, are present in current policies.

A prerequisite to addressing indigenous disadvantage is to abandon the collectivist notions that underpin present thinking, according to the author. The 'self' in self-determination can only refer to individual selves. Governments should dismantle the structures, legislation and programs which distinguish indigenous people from other Australians. Such structures help to maintain the false stereotype that people are disadvantaged because of their indigenous identity. Governments should not provide assistance to people on the basis of racial or ethnic identity, but on the basis of whether they are disadvantaged. Unfortunately there are not many grounds for optimism. As in most cases where bad policies persist, the policies are defended by people with economic, political and psychological interests in sustaining the status quo.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1993a, 1993b; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commission 1993, 1994; Commonwealth of Australia 1993a.


Available from
Office of Northern Development; free publication.

Geographic area
Northern Australia, mainly Northern Territory.

Key words
Tourism, labour market, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), equity, economic development, self-determination, self-sufficiency, funding, economic independence, research, finance.

To further indigenous objectives for self-determination and economic independence, the RCIADIC recommended that indigenous people be given the opportunity to achieve equity in the mainstream labour market and assistance to develop the economic bases of their communities. A result is that a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Strategy is being developed by ATSIC and the Commonwealth Department
of Tourism. The conference of policy-makers, academics, indigenous tourism operators, international and domestic wholesalers aimed to: foster the emerging interest by domestic and international operators in indigenous tourism; examine the role of government policies and initiatives to increase indigenous tourism; and establish greater awareness within the tourism industry of indigenous tourism potential.

Burchett provides a profile of indigenous tourism in Australia which developed first in the Northern Territory, spurred by the land base provided by the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976. A survey in 1990 found that 49 per cent of international visitors wanted to learn about 'Aboriginality'. Other research indicated that between 1988 and 1992, 'Aboriginality' as the main reason for visiting the Northern Territory grew from to 0.3 per cent to 1.4 per cent. Interest increased once visitors were in the Northern Territory to 70 per cent. Research indicates demand within the Asian market of 6–20 per cent. Total international visitation to the Northern Territory in 1991-92 was 195,000.

Some tourism projects examined in the paper are: Pitjantjatjara Tours at Angatja; Ipolera outstation which offers insight into Arrernte culture; Pajinka Wilderness Lodge, Cape York; and Manyallaluk where Jawoyn show traditional skills and art sites. Also outlined are: Tjapukai Aboriginal Dance Theatre, Kuranda; Umorrduk safari camp, north-west Arnhem Land; Putjamirra joint venture on Melville Island which offers the chance to hunt with the Tiwi; and Gagudju Hotels (Crocodile Hotel and Cooinda Lodge) in Kakadu National Park. According to Burchett, none of these enterprises are community driven, but the result of the commitment of individuals.

Some industry problems are that although indigenous arts are a significant product these small operations struggle to survive; new tour operators have minimal capital and management skills and lack the capacity to enjoy economies of scale; and indigenous tour operators indicate surplus supply, even during peak seasons. Also, mainstream tourism operators have become used to indigenous cultural experiences being in the hands of non-indigenous people and thus industry confidence must be developed in products operated by indigenous people. Burchett sees a need for better support for indigenous operators; better planning and marketing, especially overseas; and for wider industry cooperation. Research is needed into overseas markets, visitor expectations, and the demand for or capacity of the industry to sustain tourism projects, especially in remote locations.

Key cross-references

Available from
Department of Economics; University of Wollongong; $15.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, training, education, employment, unemployment, job creation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have average unemployment rates of about four times the rate of the population as a whole (over 36 per cent in 1986), participation rates are lower, and qualifications, skills and income are well below those of the Australian workforce. The problem has steadily worsened since 1974 when the end of full employment and accelerating technological change destroyed most rural jobs. Few indigenous people had high school education and most were located in regions away from metropolitan labour markets. The Australian Government responded in the 1970s with increasing expenditure in a series of employment programs. However, indigenous employment continued to deteriorate.

Employment programs have produced an increasing level of education and formal skills among indigenous people, and participation rates for educated indigenous people are similar to those of other Australians. Female participation rates have risen dramatically from a low base. More and better jobs are open to indigenous people, especially in the public sector and in indigenous organisations. Significant employment growth has occurred but it has not been sufficient to stem the rise in unemployment given the growth and age structure of the indigenous population. To date, the public sector has been the main source of new jobs for indigenous people but the option of work in service provision to indigenous communities has been exploited; thus further career development programs are important.

An employment program strategy based on education and training is hard to implement in non-metropolitan regions. Despite attempts to improve program delivery in these areas several problems remain, especially for youth, women and older workers. Special measures need to be taken to stimulate demand for indigenous labour. Direct job creation schemes are needed as even when training is available, jobs are not. Too much reliance has been placed on job training and insufficient attention given to job creation. The CDEP scheme is a step towards this, but it does not provide adequate earnings, and it reduces measured unemployment.
while institutionalising poverty. The authors see a strong case for continuing separate labour market programs for indigenous people in view of the extent and nature of the indigenous employment problem.

Key cross-references


Available from
Office of Northern Development; free publication.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Tourism – government policy, employment.

The author, a representative of the Pacific Area Travel Association, suggests that the conference aims to bring indigenous people into the mainstream tourism industry and give visitors to Australia more chances to have an 'Aboriginal experience'. The author has serious reservations about utilising indigenous people and their cultures as a tourist attraction, suggesting that governments and advisers should be cautious about urging indigenous people into tourism as serious traditions should not be marketed as features; no-one wants caricatures of their original culture. Frequently successful tourism has developed at the expense of local sensitivities. Collins' reservations are based on long experience in travel and conservation. It is suggested that indigenous people are better placed as participants in the industry, working as guides or employees.

Most tourists want only minimal contact with indigenous people. The author does not accept government insistence that a large percentage of visitors to Australia want an Aboriginal experience. Collins suggests that those in charge of Aboriginal affairs and indigenous leaders have not thought through the implications of the present situation. Australia has a large domestic tourism industry, of which international tourists only make up 10 per cent.

The author advises that government must take the pressure off and let what tourism develops among Australian indigenous people develop.
not as a set of designed attractions under the stress of a government marketing plan. The questions of what parts of indigenous cultures to save and what to sell are serious, and only indigenous people can answer this, not tourism advisers.

Key cross-references


Available from
Commonwealth Government Bookshops; $12.95.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Government policy, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, government services, government funding, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are, as a group, the most disadvantaged Australians. The book establishes the social, economic, cultural and historical setting for Commonwealth policies relating to indigenous Australians and provides an overview of Commonwealth programs specifically for, or relevant to, indigenous people.

The Commonwealth's programs of expenditure will focus on the new programs established in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The Commonwealth will also advance the resolution of land tenure issues flowing from the High Court's Mabo judgement. An important task will be to build stronger processes of cooperation and coordination following on from the endorsement by the Council of Australian Governments, of a National Commitment to Improved Outcomes in the Delivery of Programs and Services for Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.

Funding of ATSIC's programs during 1993–94 is estimated to total $779 million. One-third ($258 million) will be taken up by the CDEP scheme. Regional council programs will be allocated $231 million, reflecting their augmented role in decision-making. In 1992–93 the amount channelled through regional council budgets was $153 million. Allocations for the programs of the Department of Employment, Education and Training that are specifically for indigenous people total $282 million. An
amount of $108 million will be available for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing component of the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement administered by the Department of Health, Housing, Local Government and Community Services. The Council of Aboriginal Reconciliation has been allocated $4.3 million.

Key cross-references
ATSIC 1993a, 1993b; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commission 1993, 1994; Keating, P.J. (Prime Minister) and Howe, B. (M.P.) 1994.


Available from
Commonwealth Government Bookshops; $8.95.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Mabo, native title, compensation, reconciliation, land acquisition fund, self-government.

This paper deals with a range of issues raised by the Mabo decision. The background of consultation in preparing these proposals and key issues identified during that process are outlined. The legal framework of the Mabo decision is considered, as well as issues raised by the Racial Discrimination Act 1975, the relationship between native title and grants of interests in land, further protection of native title, and Commonwealth constitutional powers in this area. The importance of establishing an efficient process for the identification of native title is emphasised, and a model for a tribunal system is proposed. Land management is discussed under four sections: existing grants, where the central issue is uncertainty about past grants of interest in land; future grants, concerned with acknowledging and securing native title while maintaining the national interest in dealings in land; issues of negotiation and consent where grants of interest in land impact on native title; and other land management issues, including determination of rights involved in native title, various aspects of compensation payments, and the role of test cases in court.

It is suggested that land management issues be considered in the effort to achieve justice and economic development for indigenous people. An appropriate response by governments to the Mabo decision would be a package of measures incorporating aspects of justice, economic
development and reconciliation; these could include some means for providing indigenous people with a stake in industry, a national land acquisition fund, and the transfer of Aboriginal reserves and appropriate areas of unalienated Crown land to indigenous interests. The Mabo decision could be a stimulus to reconciliation, involving a range of long term issues such as constitutional change and self-government. As a basis for ongoing consultations, the Commonwealth’s Ministerial Committee on Mabo suggests several key principles aimed at guiding the challenging policy task of responding to the implications and uncertainties arising from the High Court’s decision on native title.

Key cross-references


Available from
Commonwealth Government Bookshops; $17.95.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), government programs, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment, unemployment, training, equity.

This part of the Working Nation statement states that the employment and training needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people justify special consideration in the Government’s response to the needs of the long term unemployed. The 1991 Census showed that, while there had been a fall of 4.5 per cent in the unemployment level of indigenous people from 1986, they are still almost three times as likely to be unemployed as other Australians. The AEDP, which was formally put into operation in 1987, aims to produce broad equity between indigenous and other Australians in terms of employment and economic status. A recent review of the policy was critical of the progress towards these objectives and made 59 recommendations which are designed to improve employment outcomes for indigenous people.

According to the statement, additional funding of $40 million will be used to increase the representation of indigenous peoples in public sector employment programs. ATSIC will increase CDEP scheme places by 1,250
per year until 1997–98, providing 30,000 places in 1997–98. ATSIC will also provide $16 million over four years to improve the operation of the CDEP scheme by providing resources for management and support, and $28.5 million over four years for expansion of the Community Enterprise Initiatives Scheme which provides resources for the development of income generating projects with social, cultural and economic benefits. The increased level of funding for CDEP is a response to the finding of the AEDP Review that growth in employment levels among indigenous people was largely attributable to jobs in the community sector, particularly in the CDEP scheme. In addition, the Department of Employment, Education and Training will provide $40 million over four years for places in the Training for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islander Program and other programs. Overall, there will be an 18 per cent increase to 25,850 in the number of program places for indigenous people under mainstream labour market programs from 1993–94 to 1995–96, and an 80 per cent increase in expenditure to $110 million.

For the substantial number of indigenous Australians who are, or become, long-term unemployed the Job Compact will apply. This will provide case management and other assistance to those at risk of long-term unemployment. Special provision will be made in the New Work Opportunities Program to provide employment places in rural and remote areas. Participants who have accumulated 18 months participation in a CDEP scheme or a combination of unemployment and CDEP will be eligible for the Job Compact on the same basis as other job seekers. People who have shorter durations of participation in CDEP projects will also obtain increased access to labour market programs.

Key cross-references


Available from
Cape York Land Council; poa.

Geographic area
Hopevale, Mapoon (Marpuna), Aurukun on Cape York, Queensland.
Key words
Outstations (homelands), ATSIC, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, land rights, infrastructure, autonomy, indigenous economy, development.

The outstations movement began in the early 1970s when groups of indigenous people, seeking autonomy and to renew bonds with areas of land, began to resettle traditional estates. Outstations share problems associated with remoteness, with low levels of infrastructure and discontinuous occupation. The majority of Cape York outstations are on DOGIT (Deed of Grant in Trust) or other indigenously owned land. There are land tenure problems; for example, the majority of Hopevale farm outstations are based on informal 'sub-leases' within the DOGIT and are too insecure for funding of infrastructure through ATSIC programs. The largest aggregations of outstations are at Hopevale, Old Mapoon (Marpuna) and Aurukun. The Cape York Outstations Project is a Cape York Land Council community development project to assist indigenous people and governments to negotiate arrangements which support the resettlement of the Peninsula.

The consultant's aim was to produce a report containing a plan for supporting the outstations on the Peninsula. The terms of reference required the consultant to investigate existing policies and future policy options. Areas to be investigated were population and land tenure issues; the future of the outstations movement; infrastructure and funding needs; economic development, health and education. The Report contains information on the historical context of the outstations movement and on government policies which have affected it. Information is provided on infrastructure, housing, education, health, income and employment. In 1991, 72 per cent of employed indigenous people in the Peninsula (Cooktown) ATSIC region earned less than $16,000 compared with 51.5 per cent of the Queensland population. The indigenous economy is fuelled almost exclusively by the CDEP scheme, accounting for the fact that 46 per cent of employed indigenous people earn less than $8,000 per annum. Cooke reports that indigenous participants complained that it was not taking them anywhere financially and suggests that the scheme needs reexamination. The consultant produced an Outstations Action Plan which recommends the establishment of a Regional Resource Agency to provide planning advice and development services to outstations and to coordinate regional programs. Outstation groups could access financial services through a financial and administrative secretariat serving the Regional Resource Agency, Cape York Land Council and proposed Cape York Corporation. The Peninsula ATSIC Regional Council should continue to deal with land issues.
Key cross-references


Available from
NARU; S5.

Geographic area
Willowra, Northern Territory.

Key words
Self-determination, land rights, enterprises, community planning.

During the first days of the Whitlam Government the author was asked for suggestions which, while not calling for a major policy announcement, would signal a change of government direction. Thus the Willowra cattle station was purchased for the resident Walpiri community, ending a long period of frustration during which the Council for Aboriginal Affairs had battled with its own Minister, the Department of the Interior and the Northern Territory administration. The purchase opened up the prospect for indigenous people of significant moves towards self-determination.

The paper recounts the Council's struggles within the bureaucracy to enable the Willowra Aboriginal community to regain the land and goes on to review the initiatives that the community has been able to take as a result. These include the purchase, with funds from its own resources and a loan, of the nearby property of Mount Barkley, also in traditional Walpiri country. This was purchased with the aim of diversifying the productive capacity of Willowra and providing a base for a homeland community. In 1978 the Willowra pastoral lease was converted into inalienable freehold title under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976. Other Walpiri initiatives have been the development of an organised community life including a variety of enterprises in and around Willowra. The resurgence of a strong religious and ceremonial life has resulted in the resurgence of arts and crafts activity. This has lead to the production of paintings on canvas and silk screen work using their Western Desert style of art. Also, efforts have been made to solve the problems of housing design. The author concludes that what is happening at Willowra is indigenous autonomy in action: a community in substantial control of its own affairs, maintaining a continuity with the past and making its own judgements about the direction and rate of change. Progressively it is developing the skills to administer its own affairs.
Key cross-references


Available from
NARU; $10.

Geographic area
Australia-wide with emphasis on the Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia.

Key words
Mining – agreements, royalties, indigenous autonomy, land rights, social justice.

This essay, written for The Age and the Canberra Times in the 1980s, is seen as especially relevant to Australia in the post-Mabo period. According to Coombs, the mining industry has conducted a campaign to restrict indigenous land rights in the Northern Territory and South Australia and to prevent their establishment elsewhere, presenting land rights as an obstacle to mining development and a handicap to economic recovery. The article asks whether their demands should take priority over justice to indigenous Australians. The claim of the mining industry to privileged treatment is invalid, according to the author, as it ignores mining's real contribution to export income; mining costs, such as interest payments, are generally ignored, profits remitted abroad and an Australian expendable asset lost. As to whether land rights legislation in South Australia and the Northern Territory is handicapping the progress of mining, according to Coombs, experience shows that in some instances mining companies have been able to negotiate agreements with land-owning groups. Indigenous people are, on the whole, not opposed to mining when their interests are protected.

The article also asks whether mining companies, in the absence of land rights legislation, can be relied upon to deal equitably with indigenous people. Coombs says that experience in the Kimberley region of Western Australia suggests that they cannot. Here, the Western Australian Government enabled a company to drill at Noonkanbah, despite local indigenous people's complaints that sacred sites would be lost, and without reference to the Kimberley Land Council. This agreement with the mining company reflects local people's absence of bargaining power, and long-term negative affects are evident, including serious community breakdown.
Key cross-references


Available from
University Co-operative Bookshop; $25.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Autonomy, employment, enterprises, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, education, outstations, land management, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

In these essays Coombs reflects on the nature of Aboriginal identity and the importance of autonomy for contemporary indigenous society. Topics covered include Mabo, education, health, development, the homelands movement and indigenous land use and management practices. In a chapter on Aboriginal work and economy, Coombs says that there is an assumption that there are jobs available for indigenous people, and that these can offer the lifestyle indigenous people seek. However, there is evidence that indigenous people make sacrifices to avoid accepting these jobs. This is because an Aboriginal employee will be under pressure to accept a western work ethic which establishes priority for the demands of the job, requires regularity and dependability and loyalty to one's employer. It also demands that the indigenous person take their place in a hierarchical social structure alien to them, and to place work values above indigenous ones. However, in a society where transactions are articulated through money, indigenous people need money to sustain themselves and to fulfil obligations to kin. Indigenous people find that there are some means of acquiring money which are more satisfactory than wage employment.

In States/Territories where indigenous people have land rights and the power to negotiate the sharing of resources, mutually acceptable agreements have been made between traditional owners and corporations. Aborigines are increasingly earning money as self-employed producers, in activities such as arts and crafts. Also, they are progressively trying to Aboriginalise the circumstances of their work. For example, by accepting contracts, such as for fencing, on the basis of a fee for the whole job, which allows the timing of the work to be at the discretion of the indigenous contractor. Indigenous-controlled resource agencies are acting as brokers in relation to such arrangements, identifying opportunities and the groups
who can take advantage of them, and assisting the negotiation of contracts. Within indigenous society itself, services and exchanges now often have a monetary element. Such 'micro-enterprises' are part of the informal or non-tax economy.

Coombs sees as important the activities made possible by the CDEP scheme, known as 'work for the dole', which enable the community to acquire capital and equipment as a supplement. Work activities chosen by communities include subsistence hunting and gathering, support for the production and marketing of arts and crafts, and training support for enterprises based on native flora and fauna species. Work activities also include the provision of services such as health and education to communities and employment in community clerical and accounting work. These examples suggest that it is possible, with the help of the CDEP scheme, to design an economic livelihood, which, in addition to providing a minimal cash income, can also achieve greater variety in the community employment base.

However, Coombs suggests that growth of the indigenous economy at a more sophisticated level calls for measures to restore indigenous ownership and access to land and to establish indigenous property rights in the resources of the continent, enabling them to receive a rental payment from non-Aborigines as a source of capital for their own development.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1994f, 1994g; Daly, A.E. 1994b; Sanders, W. 1994b; Smith, D.E. 1994b.


Available from
NARU; $18.

Geographic area
Mainly northern Australia.

Key words
Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, economic development, regional development, Mabo, land rights, self-government, marginalisation.

The intention of the book is to provide information which might contribute to the debate about indigenous people and their place in the economy of northern Australia. The chapter on the northern Australian economy highlights the importance of public sector spending, including pensions and
other welfare payments (at least $220 million a year), and indigenous housing and infrastructure. This includes spending by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) on the wage and oncost components of the CDEP scheme. The CDEP scheme is a Commonwealth program in which unemployed indigenous people forego their welfare entitlements but receive the equivalent from a community organisation in return for a guarantee of community-based work. There have been numerous media reports on the economic contribution of the defence forces to northern Australia, and the author suggests that this type of information is required on public sector spending and indigenous people to convince the community that indigenous people contribute to economic activity.

Crough includes chapters on indigenous people in the pastoral and mining industries; the financial aspects of the use of Aboriginal land; indigenous people and the labour force in relation to national park management arrangements; and the northern Australian economic development strategy and regional development plans. Also included are chapters on indigenous people and taxation; the Mabo decision; indigenous people and local government; and ATSIC regional councils.

The book concludes that although the practical implications of Mabo are yet to be fully recognised, it will represent one of the most significant steps in the recognition of indigenous people as land owners in a country whose economy is dependent on resource-based activities. However, the participation of indigenous people in the economic activity of Australia is not fully appreciated, especially in places such as parts of northern Australia where they represent a high proportion of the population. Indigenous people, despite their relatively low incomes, high unemployment, and marginalisation from economic activities and businesses, are beginning to recognise the potential of the relationship between land ownership, government funding, income, and in some instances, self-government. Crough states indigenous people cannot continue to be marginalised from economic activity, effectively excluded from involvement in many land use decisions, and denigrated for undermining development. Increasingly, it will not be in the interests of some of those groups to continue to do so: over time the Mabo decision will inevitably change the political agenda.

**Key cross-references**

Available from Libraries.

Geographic area Australia-wide.

Key words Mabo, native title, land rights, pastoral leases, mining, economic development, regional agreements.

This paper discusses aspects of the public debate regarding the High Court’s Mabo decision. The mining industry has successfully aired its concerns about access to land and ownership of mineral resources. While mining companies do not have unrestricted access to Aboriginal land, access to land is not the key issue facing the industry; the low level of exploration activity is more closely related to the dynamics of world commodity markets. The Western Australian Government has reacted to Mabo because, in the absence of state-based land rights, larger areas of land are likely to be subject to native title claim. Any legislation to extinguish native title must comply with the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 by not discriminating against Aboriginal land owners and may involve compensation. Native title coexistence with other land uses is the major issue for the pastoral industry, as demonstrated by the situation facing the Wangkatjungka community on Christmas Creek Station, near Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia.

The Commonwealth Government’s response to the Mabo decision is discussed including the proposed National Native Title Tribunal, the social justice package, funding for land purchases, and provisions for negotiation of regional agreements. The author suggests the mining industry’s position will be strengthened as native title legislation will be used to argue against the stronger provisions of the Northern Territory land rights legislation. Native title holders throughout Australia may eventually have minimal rights and traditional owners in the Northern Territory may see their existing rights eroded in the future. Regional agreements could be useful in negotiating Aboriginal self-government, negotiating over time delays in native title claims and in assisting Aboriginal people to exercise control over larger areas of land than they are actually recognised as owning. The author concludes that despite increasing acknowledgment of the contribution of Aboriginal people to the economic development of Australia, the achievement of social justice for Aboriginal people remains to be seen.
Key cross-references


Available from
NARU; $15.

Geographic area
Arnhem Land, Central Australia and the North American Arctic.

Key words
Enterprises, indigenous organisations, employment, self-management.

The Arnhem Land Progress Association (ALPA), begun by the Uniting Church in 1972, is one of the largest organisations operating and managing retail stores in Aboriginal communities in Australia. These are Galiwin'ku (Elcho Island), Ramingining, Gapuwiyak (Lake Evella), Minjilang (Croker Island), and Milingimbi. ALPA had total sales of $11.7 million in 1991–92, a net profit of $694,000 and more than 80 indigenous employees. It had a net profit of more than $1 million in 1990–91. The commercial success of ALPA is dependent on the performance of each store and on strong financial control from its head office in Darwin.

The research in each of these communities involved interviews with ALPA directors, store managers and workers, members of community councils and community residents including the question of whether ALPA is an indigenous organisation owned by Yolngu as it claims to be. Individual residents of communities are eligible to become members and, as a benevolent institution, ALPA distributes large amounts of its profits to community councils for community purposes. However, non-indigenous residents of these communities are also entitled to membership and ALPA's constitution restricts the voting rights of its members allowing proxies to vote on behalf of community members at meetings. After 20 years it still has no indigenous store managers, although employee training has high priority. The Chairman of ALPA is non-indigenous. The authors conclude that indigenous community members do not feel that they are owners of the organisation and are uncertain about its role.

Key cross-references
Daly, A.E. 1994; Wells, S. 1993; Young, E. 1993a.

*Available from*

NARU; $28.

*Geographic area*

Kimberley Region, Western Australia.

*Key words*

Regional economy, indigenous organisations, indigenous rights, self-government, economic development, government programs.

This report was prepared for the indigenous people of the Kimberley region who felt that development in the region has ignored their rights and interests. The region has attracted pastoralists, miners and others for more than 100 years. The terms of reference required that indigenous residents be informed of the contributions they and their organisations make to the Kimberley economy and to inform them about the Kimberley economy, especially areas which might be of interest to them. The consultants were also required to: identify government policies, services and programs of interest to indigenous people; take into account recommendations from previous government reports such as the Kimberley Region Plan Study Report and the Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody; and also to assess the implications of the High Court’s Mabo decision with respect to funding processes and particularly to self-government. To undertake the project Crough and Christopherson met with people working in, and associated with, a range of indigenous organisations, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) regional councils, individual regional councillors, Commissioners and staff of government departments and authorities in the region.

Some of the findings were that the income of the 82 indigenous organisations for which data were obtained was $62.9 million in 1991–92. Approximately 80 per cent of this comprised ATSIC grants. Total non-government income of Aboriginal organisations amounted to $6.4 million. Total income of Aboriginal organisations in the region was at least $72 million in 1991–92 and total expenditure was at least $66.3 million. Thus spending by indigenous organisations is a significant contributor to the economic activity of the Kimberley region, with at least 173 businesses providing services and products to indigenous organisations in 1991–92. Social security payments to indigenous people, Community Development Employment Projects scheme wages and ATSIC wage and salary payments was approximately $60 million; 36 per cent of retail sales in 1991–92 can be attributed to this income. If the production of the Argyle diamond mine is excluded from estimates of the regional economy, then spending
attributable to indigenous people represented approximately 40 per cent of the income of the Kimberley regional economy in 1991–92.

Key cross-references


Available from CAEPR: S6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Education, employment, labour force status, youth, government policy, government programs, indigenous people in the economy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics.

The poor position of young indigenous people in the labour market, coupled with their restricted educational opportunities, has been of great concern to policy makers. The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, for example, drew attention to the importance of the lack of educational and employment opportunities in influencing the life chances of the people it reported on. Specific government policies, such as Priority One and the Social Strategy for Young Australians have the specific aim to reduce the high levels of unemployment among youth. Schemes such as ABSTUDY aim to encourage young indigenous people to stay in education for longer based on the assumption, for which there is some empirical support, that the more educated are more likely to find work. Published information on young indigenous people and the labour market is, however, limited.

This paper aims to fill some of the gaps in knowledge concerning young indigenous people aged 15–24 years. It presents data from the 1986 Census on the educational attainment, labour force status and income of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and compares them with other Australians in the same age group. Young indigenous people had lower levels of educational attainment using indicators of both years of schooling and qualifications. They were also less likely to be employed and more likely to be unemployed than their counterparts in the rest of the Australian population. Those in employment were more concentrated in the lower-skilled occupations and in the public sector than were other
Australian youth. These differences had implications for income status. Among 15–19 year olds there was little difference in the median income of Aborigines and non-Aborigines, but among 20–24 year olds, where a larger proportion of non-Aborigines were in employment, the Aboriginal median income fell to 60 per cent of that of non-Aboriginal people. The data presented here provide a benchmark against which 1991 Census results will be compared.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Government policy, government funding, self-employment, enterprises, indigenous people in the economy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics.

Small business and self-employment are now regarded as important parts of the economy with specific government policies aimed at promoting these activities, including the Aboriginal Enterprise Incentive Scheme which aims to assist indigenous people to establish small businesses. Self-employment has been regarded as an important avenue for the social and economic advancement of disadvantaged groups as a means to overcome problems such as language difficulties and circumvent discrimination in employment. Some Australian evidence suggests that self-employment may be particularly profitable where there are large concentrations of an ethnic group as members have the advantage of being able to sell goods and services to one another. As measured by the census, self-employment has, however, remained of little importance to Aboriginal people. In 1986, only 1.3 per cent of the Aboriginal working-age population was self-employed compared with 10 per cent of other Australians of working age.

This paper presents a comparison of the characteristics of the Aboriginal self-employed with those of Aboriginal wage and salary earners and the self-employed among the rest of the Australian population. In comparison with other Aborigines in employment, the major differences
were in the industry and occupation of employment. Self-employed Aborigines were more likely to be working as tradespersons and to work in the private sector than were Aboriginal wage and salary earners. Of all self-employed indigenous people, 25 per cent were tradespersons, in contrast to 14 per cent of wage and salary-earners. Compared with other self-employed Australians, indigenous people were less educated. Of indigenous and non-indigenous self-employed people, 2 per cent and 6.8 per cent respectively had a university degree. Also self-employed indigenous people were more likely to be in the lower-skilled occupations; 16 per cent of indigenous people and 6.5 per cent of non indigenous people were labourers.

However, the census figures only present a partial picture of indigenous entrepreneurial activity. For example, indigenous hunter-gatherers and artists may not identify as self-employed. A further reason for the low level of self-employment among indigenous people might be that government agencies prefer to fund community enterprises rather than individual ones.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1994c, 1994i; Daly, A.E. 1993a, 1993c, 1994b; Wells, S. 1993.


Available from
CAEPR; S6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Labour market, labour force participation, employment, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, social indicators, indigenous people in the economy, education.

This paper uses data from the 1986 Census to describe and analyse the position of indigenous people over the age of 50 years in the labour market. This group accounted for a smaller proportion of the indigenous population than the non-indigenous population. The results of other labour market comparisons between the indigenous and non-indigenous populations of Australia are apparent in this comparison of older people. Indigenous men and women in this age group were much less likely to be in paid
employment than other Australians. In common with other indigenous people, those in employment were in less skilled occupations; almost half of both men and women in employment were working as labourers, a category which accounted for less than 20 per cent of employment among other Australians over 50 years of age. The public sector and community services are major employers of indigenous people, including older workers. The occupational distribution of older indigenous people was reflected in the much lower levels of educational attainment compared with other Australians; over 90 per cent had no formal qualifications. About one-quarter had not attended school, compared with less than 2 per cent of the rest of the Australian population. Lower levels of employment and concentration in the less skilled occupations was reflected in median individual incomes. Indigenous men aged 50–60 years had median incomes 50 per cent of those of non-indigenous males of the same age.

The paper includes a formal model of the determinants of labour force status for this group. The results show that after holding a range of factors constant, such as educational attainment, age, location of residence, and marital status, Aboriginality had a negative effect on the probability of being in full-time employment. It was estimated that the probability of being in full-time employment was 22 percentage points lower for an indigenous man than for a comparable non-indigenous man. For indigenous women, it was 13 percentage points lower. A second major finding of this analysis was the contribution of additional education to the probability of being in full-time employment, especially for women. An important issue for this age group, which requires further research using alternative data sources, is the effect of health status on the ability of people to participate in paid employment.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Indigenous youth, labour market status, labour market programs, education, employment.
The position of young Australians in the labour market has been of concern to policy makers as unemployment rates among young people have remained well above the average for the total labour force. The indigenous population is, on average, younger than the total Australian population. In 1991, 35.3 per cent of the indigenous population aged 15 years and over was in the age category 15–24 years, compared with 20 per cent of the general Australian population. This group may also be disadvantaged because of their Aboriginality. The paper presents evidence of the educational and labour market status of young indigenous Australians as reported in the 1991 Census, building on similar work relating to the 1986 Census, and providing information on intercensal changes.

The data show that while there have been significant improvements in the educational levels of young indigenous Australians, these levels remain behind those of other Australian youth. Among 15–19 year olds, a smaller proportion of indigenous males and females were still at school than among the rest of the population; about 33 per cent compared with about 50 per cent. There is evidence that these figures may underestimate the difference in educational attainment between the two groups. Age at leaving school is only a rough indicator of the actual time spent in school. Indigenous children had high truancy rates, thus their literacy and numeracy skills may well fall below those of other school leavers who have attended regularly; there is also evidence of lower levels of educational attainment as measured by qualifications.

There is evidence that indigenous youth were disadvantaged in the labour market; less likely to be employed and more likely to be unemployed than other Australian youth. While 57 per cent of indigenous males and females aged 15–19 years were outside the labour force, about 50 per cent of non-indigenous males and females were classified in this group. One-quarter of young indigenous males aged 15–24 years were unemployed, compared with 14.5 per cent of non-indigenous males. These differences were smaller for females. However, between 1986 and 1991, when conditions deteriorated in the Australian labour market in general, indigenous youth experienced some growth in employment and a reduction in unemployment, the reverse of the patterns for other Australian youth. The important role of programs specific to indigenous people in creating this result is discussed at the conclusion of the paper.

Key cross-references

Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Economic status, income, employment, labour force status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics.

This paper uses data from the 1991 Census to describe the position of indigenous people over 50 years of age in the labour market. This group accounted for a smaller part of the indigenous adult population than of the rest of the Australian population. Indigenous people had lower levels of educational attainment than non-indigenous Australians in this age group. Twenty-two per cent had not attended school, compared with less than 2 per cent in the non-indigenous population and over 90 per cent had no qualifications. This had implications for the type of occupations available to those who were in work. About one-third of men and women in employment were working as labourers, a category which accounted for only 15 per cent of employment among non-indigenous Australians in this age group.

Indigenous people over 50 years were less likely to be employed, and more likely to be unemployed or outside the labour force, than their non-indigenous counterparts. Among 50–54 year old males, less than 50 per cent of indigenous Australians were employed, compared with 80 per cent in this age category in the rest of the Australian male population. A similar pattern was in evidence at the section-of-State level. As with younger indigenous people, older indigenous Australians were employed in public administrative and community services employment to a greater extent than non-indigenous Australians. Lower levels of employment and concentration in less skilled occupations was reflected in their median individual incomes. Men aged 50–64 years had a median income which was 50 per cent of that of non-indigenous males of the same age. Indigenous women were better off, as their median income was only slightly less than that of non-indigenous women. However, there were differences in the types of households in which indigenous and non-indigenous Australians lived; indigenous people were less likely to live in sole person households. A comparison of median household income per household member showed that indigenous people were relatively worse off when the differences in household structure were taken into account.
In comparing 1986 and 1991 Census results there were some positive signs. The share of indigenous people over 50 years of age with no schooling fell by five percentage points and the share of those in employment increased. There was also evidence of a relative decline in the importance of labouring as an occupation. These changes were not, however, reflected in an improvement in the relative income of older indigenous Australians. Census data do not enable an investigation of the effects of poor health on the ability of older indigenous people to participate in paid employment; this issue requires further investigation.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Self-employment, indigenous enterprises, education, training, private sector, labour market status, industry of employment.

In 1991, the indigenous working-aged population had a self-employment rate one-fifth that of the non-indigenous population; 2.2 per cent compared with 11.1 per cent. The author suggests a number of explanations. Many work as artists and hunter-gatherers and do not classify themselves as self-employed. The majority remain dependent on income transfers from government. Government emphasis on community enterprises may contribute to the low rate of self-employment among indigenous Australians, especially in urban settings where there are no communities. Other explanations include: lack of education and training in enterprise organisation; shortage of capital and limited opportunities in remote locations; and the role of traditional value systems which do not fit well with the organisation of enterprises. However, some factors may have positive as well as negative aspects, and indigenous people living traditional lifestyles in remote locations may be considered to have unique opportunities for the development of small business.
The major difference between indigenous self-employed people and indigenous wage and salary earners was in the occupation and industry of employment. Self-employed indigenous Australians were more likely to be employed as tradespersons and to work in private sector agriculture, construction and the wholesale and retail trades, and may offer opportunities for the employment of indigenous people in these industries. In comparison with other self-employed Australians, self-employed indigenous Australians had spent less time at school and were less formally qualified. Self-employed indigenous people were mainly in trades and in the lower-skilled occupations of plant and machinery operators and labourers. They were under-represented among managers, administrators and professionals compared with other self-employed Australians.

Between 1986 and 1991, the number of self-employed indigenous Australians doubled. This growth was concentrated among those who had left school early, in contrast to the larger share of employment growth for indigenous wage and salary earners and the non-indigenous self-employed who had spent longer at school. Employment growth for the indigenous self-employed was strong among managers, administrators and tradespersons and was not as strong among professionals and salespersons. The growth in self-employed indigenous people was evenly spread. The industries of construction, wholesale and retail trade, and community services accounted for half of the growth in indigenous self-employment.

Community enterprises may offer employment and income for indigenous people in the way that self-employment has for some migrant groups. However, a difference between privately owned small businesses and indigenous community enterprises arises when community enterprises remain dependent on public money.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1994f; Altman, J.C. 1993b; Daly A.E. 1993b.


Available from
CAEPR; S6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.
Indigenous people in full-time employment have lower incomes, on average, than non-indigenous Australians in full-time employment. This paper, using the framework of human capital theory, separates the differences in income for indigenous and non-indigenous men and women in full-time work into that part which can be accounted for by differences in the labour market attributes of indigenous people and unexplained differences in the rewards to these endowments. The results show that the main factor in lower incomes for indigenous males compared with their non-indigenous counterparts was a lower level of human capital endowments rather than the rewards received for these endowments. An even stronger result held for females; endowment differences were estimated to account for all of the difference in income between indigenous and non-indigenous females. In comparing across the sexes, however, these estimates show that the differences in rewards for endowments more than accounted for the income gap. Given their endowments of human capital, indigenous females could be expected to earn more than indigenous males while the actual outcome was that they earned less. Daly says the results emphasise the role of education and working experience in raising income. Evidence from the United States suggests that raising the quality of education offered to black Americans made an important contribution to improvements in their relative incomes.

Another issue raised is the association between labour market experience and income. Indigenous people employed under the CDEP scheme will be accumulating labour market experience. The human capital model suggests that people learning work skills on-the-job, should become more productive the longer they are on the scheme. However, unless they can gain mainstream employment, their work experience will not result in higher incomes, as the wage received is based on welfare entitlements.

The results showed that indigenous Australians are less likely to be in full-time employment than non-indigenous Australians. This may reflect either discrimination or different preferences about labour supply. Daly says it is possible that these effects are more apparent at the point of entry into employment rather than among those already in full-time employment. The evidence presented here does not support the hypothesis that indigenous people working full time face a high level of discrimination in the earnings they receive. Perhaps this reflects the Australian system of wage determination which has limited the extent to which the earnings of individuals can differ from award rates.

Key cross-references

Available from
CAEPR; S6.

Geographic area.
Australia-wide.

Key words
Labour force status, employment, unemployment, education, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, racism, remote locations.

Over the period 1971–91, Aboriginal people were less likely to be employed and more likely to be unemployed or outside the labour force than were other Australians. The paper explains the source of some of these differences in a formal regression framework using 1986 Census data. The results show that a number of factors contribute to these differences in labour market outcomes. The most striking is the effect of educational attainment on labour force status. Educated Aboriginal people were more likely to be in full-time employment and less likely to be unemployed or not in the labour force than were the less educated. The effect of tertiary qualifications was particularly marked for Aboriginal females, for whom these qualifications increased the probability of being in full-time employment to an even greater extent than for non-Aboriginal females.

Demographic variables such as marital status and the number of dependent children had different effects on the labour force status of males and females. While males who had never been married were less likely to be in full-time employment, females who had never been married were more likely to be in full-time employment. Another important influence on labour force status was location of residence. Aboriginal people were less likely to be in full-time employment and were more likely to be outside the labour force if they lived in a rural area. While results showed no significant difference in labour force status for women living in remote parts of Australia compared with settled Australia, there was some evidence that the probability of males being unemployed was higher in remote Australia than elsewhere.

The analysis shows that even after holding a wide range of other factors constant, Aboriginality had an independent effect on labour force status. It reduced the probability of being in full-time employment for males and raised the probability of being unemployed. The probability of an Aboriginal female with the average characteristics of the whole sample having a full-time or part-time job was lower than for a comparable non-
Aboriginal female. The replication of this exercise on 1991 Census data could reveal interesting changes from the results reported here for 1986.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Welfare dependence, unemployment, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, government programs, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

An issue frequently raised in the literature on the economic status of Aboriginal people is the importance of welfare transfers as a source of income, yet there is very little aggregate information documenting this.

The purpose of this paper is to present the available evidence from the census and administrative data sources on the importance of welfare payments as a source of income for indigenous people. One estimate is based on the share of total individual income coming from those in employment. Results from the 1976 and 1991 Censuses show that for Aboriginal people, a smaller share of total individual income came from this source than was the case for other Australians.

In 1976, 80 per cent of the total income of indigenous males came from employment and in 1991 only 70 per cent of their income came from this source, whereas for non-indigenous males 90 per cent and 85 per cent, respectively, came from employment. In 1991, 43 per cent of the total income of indigenous women came from those who were outside the labour force. This contrasted with one-quarter of the income of other Australian women. However, the situation is obfuscated by the growth of the CDEP scheme which has reduced the numbers of unemployed indigenous people. Whether indigenous people moving from social security benefits to the CDEP scheme should be seen as moving off welfare is a contentious issue. Under this scheme, individuals agree to forego welfare
entitlements and work part-time on community projects for the equivalent in wages. In 1991 there were 18,266 participants in the scheme.

The conclusions based on more recent administrative data are unclear because of the difficulties faced in identifying Aboriginal people and in combining figures from different sources. Nevertheless, the figures are consistent with a broad conclusion of higher levels of welfare receipts among Aboriginal people. This reflects important underlying problems facing Aboriginal people; high levels of unemployment, poor health and the high incidence of sole parenthood. The paper ends by stressing the importance of addressing these issues directly.

**Key cross-references**

**DALY, A.E. and HAWKE, A.E. 1994. 'How important is the welfare system as a source of income for indigenous Australians', Economic Papers, 13 (3): 74–83. (An earlier version of this paper is available as 'The impact of the welfare state on the economic status of indigenous Australian women', CAEPR Discussion Paper No. 65, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), The Australian National University, Canberra, 18pp.)**

*Available from Libraries.*

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Indigenous women, income, employment, unemployment, welfare dependence.

Data from the 1991 Census and Department of Social Security (DSS) are utilised to examine the role of social security income in explaining the growth and relative improvement in the income status of indigenous women. The employment rate of indigenous women has grown over the last 20 years, however, it remains at two-thirds of the non-indigenous rate. The median income of indigenous women was 81 per cent of that of non-indigenous women in 1991. This improvement in the income status of indigenous women contrasts with a deterioration for indigenous males over the same period. The authors argue that increased access to welfare income is an important source of the improvement of indigenous women's income. Although direct evidence is limited, the growth in the real income of women who are not in the labour force and the relatively high incidence of
DSS payments are indicative of the importance of this source of income. Additional evidence from case studies supports this hypothesis. Because the increase in income has been at the cost of increased dependence on social security sources it is important to consider the underlying factors which have created this need for income support. Among these are the relatively high unemployment rates of indigenous Australians, poor health and the large proportion of one-parent families. It is necessary to address these factors in order to raise the economic status of indigenous people.

According to Daly and Hawke, a qualification to the conclusion that the income status of indigenous women has improved arises from the need to consider their family circumstances. The income reported by an adult in the census may be the income not only of that individual but also their dependants. Indigenous women have, on average, more dependant children than do non-indigenous women and a per capita correction of the income figures would reduce the relative income status of individual indigenous women. A further issue is the extent to which income is transferred within families. While individuals may have a low personal income, access to collectively held assets and the income of other family members may compensate for this. Thus alternative sources of income will be constrained by the incomes of other family members. Where indigenous women live with indigenous men, the decline in male incomes will have had adverse effects on the economic status of indigenous women. Census data show that in 1991 indigenous families were worse off than other Australian families; the ratio of median family income being 0.68. If the figures are further adjusted to take account of family size, the ratio falls to 0.54. Thus, although the income status of individual indigenous women has improved, this must be qualified by the circumstances of the families in which they live.

Key cross-references


Available from
Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Perth; free publication.

Geographic area
Western Australia, especially the Kimberley region.
Despite knowledge of indigenous disadvantage and attempts by governments to redress inequalities, the quality of life and equality of opportunity for indigenous people remains less than that enjoyed by non-indigenous Western Australians. The Task Force was required to review the activities of the Government of Western Australia in relation to the conditions and development of indigenous Western Australians and to recommend a strategy for the implementation of the Government’s program. To prepare the Report, the Task Force utilised government agencies, conducted workshops and community consultations and met with organisations and individuals. The Report builds on the work of previous reviews, reports, Royal Commissions and consultations. As well as analysis of funding and expenditure by State and Commonwealth Governments on mainstream and Aboriginal-specific programs, the Report contains information on Commonwealth/State agreements, population projections, projections of future health status, review of community stores and a review of relevant experience from other countries with substantial indigenous populations.

The Report's analysis of Aboriginal-specific programs reveals that in 1992–93 $33,263 million out of the $106,786 million was spent on economic programs. The report states that there should be a more rational approach to funding; at the heart of the difficulty is the complicated relationship between Commonwealth and State Governments and local governments. The Task Force sees as ideal the integration of spending by State and Commonwealth Governments into one funding program, whereby the Commonwealth would purchase services using the State Government as a delivery agent. However, it is recognised that this is an ideal which is unlikely to be implemented. Another model outlined is the purchaser-provider model under which regional offices are able to purchase services from government departments, community organisations and the private sector in order to provide the most appropriate service.

Community Profile Data for 67 sampled communities revealed that 4,000 indigenous people earned between $5,000 and $8,000 in 1991. Under 40 per cent of indigenous people in the labour force are employed compared with almost 80 per cent of the total population. Almost 80 per cent of indigenous people in the labour force are unemployed whereas under 40 per cent of the total population are not employed. The Report recommends that the Department of Employment, Education and Training map the regional training requirements of indigenous people by mid-1995, that skills audits be conducted and that consideration be given to allocating funding to the private sector to provide training. A range of recommendations address ways of increasing participation in economic development and employment. There is discussion of strategies related to
indigenous participation in tourism, arts and crafts and land management. The Report places a focus on the involvement of the private sector in the formation of indigenous economic development programs. Also, the Task Force proposed a framework through which people can plan for the development of their community. It is recommended that indigenous people be more directly involved in the provision of services and that Chief Executive Officers meet every six months to resolve problems in relation to the provision of essential services to indigenous communities.

Key cross-references


Available from
Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; free publication.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Land rights, independence, government programs, colonialism, disadvantage, employment, education, inequality.

In the last quarter-century there has been an improvement in indigenous Australians' socioeconomic position but they remain severely disadvantaged. The major indicators of wellbeing show that most indigenous Australians have fewer assets, less income, less regular and permanent work, fewer educational qualifications, lower housing quality and more health problems than other Australians. This paper aims to explain why disadvantage is so widespread and makes suggestions to help to overcome it.

The authors suggest that a major cause of disadvantage is the continuing inter-generational impact following the extreme disadvantage created by the long period of formal exclusion and control. Before the 1970s few indigenous people could gain access to quality education, employment, marketable skills, land or financial capital. Another cause of disadvantage is that indigenous Australians are more likely to live in remote areas where job opportunities are fewer, services limited and costs
are high. Many indigenous communities have poor education services and options for economic development are limited. In 1971 nearly 25 per cent of all employed indigenous Australians were employed in pastoralism and agriculture; that sector now employs under 5 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Also, indigenous people continue to be excluded from economic opportunities both through individual discrimination and through systemic factors, where the rules and practices of organisations and services do not take account of indigenous Australians' needs and circumstances.

Special programs aimed at helping to overcome indigenous disadvantage have been only partially successful. This is because they have often been substitutes for mainstream services; there has been instability of program goals; and they have been circumscribed by administrative constraints, duplication, overlap and inefficiency. As well, centralised policy-making and funding has allowed little room for control by communities. Programs have served to keep indigenous communities dependent on government.

Davidson and Jennett state that, paradoxically, securing greater economic independence for indigenous Australians will involve developing greater links with the mainstream economy. This could include securing the capacity for land acquisition for those whose native title has been extinguished. The process could also include: gaining support for enterprises development; improving access to financial capital; providing employment incentives; supporting regional initiatives; and providing the capacity for communities to develop agreements with all spheres of government on issues of service provision and land use.

Key cross-references


Available from
CDEP Policy Section, ATSIC; free publication.

Geographic area
Australia-wide, with an emphasis on remote areas.
Key words
ATSIC, Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment.

The Report reviews the social and economic impacts of the CDEP scheme, assessing its performance against the enterprise, equity and skills enhancement goals of the AEDP. The scheme has 21,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants in 200 sites across Australia. Participant numbers have trebled since 1987-88 and it is expected to undergo a 10–15 per cent increase in participation in the next two years. Expenditure increased from $65 million in 1987-88 to $231 million in 1992-93.

The consultants visited CDEP communities in order to determine the appropriateness of the program in meeting indigenous needs and program objectives and identify issues which impact on the effectiveness of the program. The Report lists the principal impacts of the CDEP scheme as providing an employment framework (mainly of part-time work) funded from public sources and people with experience and skills related to the establishment and maintenance of community infrastructure and services. It is also seen as providing a stable administrative base which underpins the operation of other government programs, and personal services to some CDEP community members, to assist them in their dealings with government agencies, financial institutions and suppliers of goods and services. The authors state that notwithstanding the achievements of communities involved with CDEP schemes, the fieldwork uncovered deepseated problems. These include questions such as whether the program is really equipped to move towards the development of the communities in which it operates, or as a base for employment and enterprise generation, labour market entry or other sustainable employment. Training is unstructured and lacks accreditation; there is a perception that the program has stalled in some sites, with participants stating that they are 'stuck' in CDEP without a career path. Also, the failure of other agencies to meet obligations in remote communities means that CDEP substitutes for services arguably the responsibility of others, such as in the provision of health, education, law and order, municipal services, driving up the cost of the program. Other problems are that the capacity of ATSIC to expand the program is limited by resources, and a lack of integration between the CDEP scheme and other ATSIC programs.

The consultants propose a new simpler goal statement for the program which seeks to enable communities to choose the appropriate blend of social and economic activities supported from CDEP. The goals encourage CDEP activity towards infrastructure provision, enterprise generation and skills acquisition. They acknowledge the role of ATSIC in the subsidisation of these activities, signalling a further move from the notion of CDEP as an income support program. The report encourages ATSIC to use the CDEP framework more for regional planning and
integrate other government programs, such as the enterprise programs. They suggest a greater emphasis be placed on reviews to ensure forward planning rather than compliance, and that the Australian Bureau of Statistics resolve the census problems in relation to CDEP employment.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*
Department of Tourism (Commonwealth); free publication.

*Geographic area*
Australia-wide.

*Key words*
Tourism, enterprises, employment, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), Community Development Employment Projects scheme.

Tourism was one of the industries identified in the Commonwealth Government’s response to the recommendations of the RCIADIC as offering greater opportunities for participation by indigenous people. As a consequence the Government has initiated the development of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Strategy. This booklet, by use of photographs and illustrations, showcases a selection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, companies and communities that have achieved success in the tourism industry. Eleven successful tourism operations are profiled. They illustrate some of the different ways indigenous people are participating in the tourism industry, from selling artwork and designs to dealers (limiting contact with tourists) to working directly with tourists; and from owning and operating a tourist attraction to hosting tourists on cultural tours. Examples of some indigenous enterprises included in the booklet are outlined below.

Sydney-based Bangara Dance Theatre is a contemporary dance company employing 21 indigenous people. It plans to have its own theatre by 1995. Bambuk Living Cultural Centre in Victoria, opened in 1991, employs 19 Aboriginal staff. It offers cultural exhibits and activities and an Aboriginal restaurant which is now self-funding. Camp Coorong in the Coorong National Park, South Australia, employs two indigenous people. Desert Tracks on the Northern Territory and South Australian border is an
educational eco-tour teaching Aboriginal culture; it employs 20 indigenous staff. Jumbana Design, Adelaide, has 12 employees including three indigenous people. Retail sales increased by 70 per cent in 1992–93.

**Key cross-references**
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1994c; Altman, J.C. 1993a, 1993b; Australian Science and Technology Council 1993.


*Available from*
Native Titles Research Unit, AIATSIS; free publication.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Native title, prescribed body corporate (PBC), land rights, property rights, land management.

This paper discusses the question of how native titles, once they have been determined to exist, will be managed. It aims at helping native title holders to choose the most suitable body to act on their behalf as required by the *Native Title Act 1993* (NTA) and at assisting people in making inputs to the current regulation-making on the subject.

The NTA establishes that every native title must have a PBC determined at the same time as the native title determination is made, as a contact point for dealings between the native title holders and outsiders. The NTA leaves unanswered important questions about who these bodies will be, and their functions, to be spelt out in follow-up regulations which are being prepared by the government in consultation with ATSIC and representative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bodies. This paper examines basic issues underlying native title management, and whether there is the need for a new tailor-made legal entity (a native title corporation) to carry out native title management functions. The need for a body corporate is explained in legal and practical terms, and the steps and choices involved in identifying the PBC are outlined. The difficulties in defining functions of a PBC are discussed; it is noted that the NTA restricts the freedom of native title holders to deal with their titles and the functions and powers of a PBC acting on their behalf. Functions of a PBC are outlined and the key role of consultation in their operation is emphasised.

It is argued that the *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976*, which provides for 'Incorporated Aboriginal Associations', is too broad for
the particular needs of PBCs and too narrow to allow freedom in decision-making. New legislation is needed providing a simple method for incorporation of land-owning bodies for native title corporations, combining three crucial factors: self-management principles; a local profile with which the particular native title holders in question can identify; and a professional competency. Possible candidates for incorporation are suggested; the author favours native title holders themselves incorporating as the PBC to manage the native title, as this would reflect the practice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and provide direct participation by native title holders in decisions over their native title. A possible lack of professional expertise could be overcome by requiring the body to take the necessary advice in appropriate cases.

Finally the question of the best way for native title holders to incorporate is addressed. Necessary elements of incorporation are that it must include all the members of the title-holding group and no-one else, its powers should be limited mainly to the management of the native title and related matters, and its rules for self-management should cover internal decision-making procedures of consultation, dispute settlement and group decision-making, and external decision-making procedures indicating group decisions.

**Key cross-references**


**Available from**
Office of Northern Development; free publication.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Tourism, self-determination, economic self-sufficiency, government policy.

Finlayson questions the underlying assumption, promoted by government, that participation in commercial tourism can bring self-management, self-determination and self-sufficiency to indigenous people. The author asks
for example, how the above objectives will be achieved in an industry where commercial enterprise development and economic realism are paramount to commercial viability.

The author points out also that some indigenous people may not wish to become involved in tourism and this should be the starting point for policy development. Others may wish to become involved but are not in a position to do so, and there are those that may be involved for motives other than those of economic self-sufficiency. Their motives could be to provide employment, to share their culture with visitors, or as a means of controlling tourists to their area. Many indigenous people who become involved in tourism ventures do not appreciate the service requirements of the industry, nor do they know how to present their cultural product. This is the point at which assistance is required; however, bureaucracies have a tendency to fail to gauge and manage these sociocultural gaps in expectation. Finlayson suggests that a targeted tourism strategy is needed which is sensitive to the social and cultural parameters of indigenous communities, and one which involves them in the decision-making processes. The author concludes with the warning that tourism is not a universal solution to current economic disadvantage.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1994c; Altman, J.C. 1993a, 1993b; Department of Tourism 1994; Morony, R. 1993.


Available from
NARU; S5.

Geographic area
Australia, Canada.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), self-government, self-determination, economic status.

Fletcher states that State and local governments have failed to look after their indigenous citizens in ways which are experienced by other Australians. ATSIC provides funds for services that indigenous communities would receive from their State, territory and local governments if they were non-indigenous communities.
The author argues that official government support for indigenous self-government is now overdue. Indigenous communities do not have authority over their own revenue and expenditure base and thus they are economically marginalised. This marginalisation is increased because they are not able to legislate on their own behalf; are denied full political legitimacy in the day to day running of their own communities; do not have full access to self-determination; and have no guarantee of constitutional security. Until communities achieve some form of self-government, they will remain economically and politically marginalised. In a formal sense, and in terms of institutional recognition, these rights received attention by the High Court, but from an indigenous viewpoint these rights should be recognised in the Constitution. Self-government will go some way towards reversing the economic and social deterioration caused by the policies of white administrators. Self-government could be achieved by overhauling relationships between governments (for example, between the Commonwealth and the States) and by setting up structures which allow indigenous communities to voluntarily achieve their own form of self-government and, ultimately, to engage in government to government negotiations.

The paper suggests that Australian governments are lagging far behind other countries, particularly Canada, in their behaviour towards their indigenous peoples. Changes to the status of indigenous Canadians followed Canada’s Constitution Act 1982 which established a constitutional base for indigenous self-government and for the restoration of Indian lands to Canada’s indigenous peoples. At that time the Canadian Parliament formally recognised the important links between self-determination, native lands, economic development and reform of fiscal arrangements between federal, provincial and Indian governments. Since then Canadians have come to wholeheartedly accept indigenous self-government.

Key cross-references


Available from
Office of Northern Development; free publication.

Geographic area
Northern Territory.
Key words
Cultural tourism, arts and crafts, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, employment.

The author, who belongs to the Arts Unit of the Australia Council, discusses indigenous arts and crafts in relation to cultural tourism, and asks questions such as, are indigenous people cashing in on their cultural heritage and selling their spirituality.

Fogerty says that the decision about whether to present their culture to the general public can only be made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities themselves. Usually it is the elders who decide what would be culturally appropriate to show to tourists; generally there is an 'open' version of dance, craft or painting which is suitable for presentation to tourists, and a more sacred version which can only be presented in a ceremonial context. Thus some aspects of indigenous cultures can often be utilised for cultural tourism without a group 'selling their spirituality'. A community's motives are generally to educate outsiders about their way of life, as well as for commercial gain. Some see this as a way of preserving their culture.

The author provides some analysis of the Australia Council's 1993 two month survey which found that: 45 per cent of visitors to Australia are interested in seeing and learning about indigenous arts and culture; 5 per cent of visitors went on a tour that showed them aspects of indigenous culture, 16 per cent went to an art gallery to see indigenous art; only 7 per cent (or 250,000 international tourists, 21 per cent of whom were American and Canadian visitors) were able to see a performance of theatre, music or dance.

Key cross references


Available from
Libraries.

Geographic area
Western Desert.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, social justice, equity, equality, development, assimilation, disadvantage.
According to the author, there is an assumption that social justice for indigenous people can be achieved by redressing statistical differences discovered through direct comparison of the majority and indigenous societies. The author argues that in the Western Desert community context, the simplistic indicators of disadvantage such as statistics on inequality – home ownership, school retention rates and level of unemployment, and the models of equity they have spawned, ignore the essentially antithetical nature of European and Aboriginal cultures. These indicators thus say very little about social justice at the community level. The author suggests Western Desert people have demonstrated that, despite what policy makers might think, social justice is not living quiet middle-class lives in middle-class houses and performing cultural ceremonies at weekends. Folds says that social justice is also more than the empowerment of community institutions and indigenous people selectively adopting mainstream material benefits while holding on to their own culture. There is evidence that at best this produces a wasteful veneer of material equity over indigenous lifestyles. The change is rarely impressive enough to mask the social disintegration that often goes hand in hand with change. Why should indigenous people change their lives when the impetus for change is merely statistics which create embarrassment in the national capital?

To create social justice for themselves indigenous people must deconstruct the introduced concepts, but they are unlikely to do so while the whole thrust of national government policy is working to promote them. Real social justice necessitates admitting that change is not cost neutral, that development has costs that must be acknowledged and become part of the process of change. For example, one cost of living in overcrowded houses is poor child health, but to change this contradicts indigenous values which see providing for visitors as important. Thus Western Desert people often get little benefit from living in new houses. Real social justice has none of the attractions of grafted-on development. It demands a more sophisticated perspective which more readily accepts the differences between the two societies not solely as inequality, but as aspects of very different cultures even although some of the differences are unpalatable. Such a model of social justice would, however, be unpopular with both societies. The current model makes it possible at least in the short-term, for the national government to claim to be delivering equity, however inappropriate, to indigenous communities. The myth that indigenous people can wholly embrace their own values and have the complete repertoire of majority society advantages has also been internalised by many indigenous people.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1993a, 1993b; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commission 1993, 1994; Daube, M. 1994; Sanders, W. 1994b.

Available from
University Co-operative Bookshop; $29.95.

Geographic area
Queensland/Australia-wide.

Key words
Mabo, native title, resource rights, land rights, mineral resources – rights, economic development and resources, pastoral leases.

This article, written shortly after the Mabo decision was handed down in June 1992, focuses on whether the decision is workable. Possible inconsistencies in extrapolating from a decision based on features of settlement on the three Murray Islands involved in the Mabo case to mainland Australia are outlined before considering the application of native title to the law of natural resources, covering minerals, water, forestry, fishing, agricultural and pastoral assets. The author suggests that as far as water, fishing and forestry are concerned, existing legislation is adaptable to native title, with possible exceptions in forestry with regard to fires and hunting and gathering practices. Also, intensive agriculture and grazing activities should be inconsistent with native title, but this would involve contesting each case. The status of Crown leaseholds in relation to native title are more uncertain: a Crown lease or licence which does not expressly reserve Aboriginal rights is not necessarily inconsistent with native title. Uncertainty also exists where legislation in relation to National Parks forbids certain activities such as the taking of flora and fauna.

The mining industry's interest in remote areas, where large-scale resource developments may occur, heighten its concern over Mabo. Existing anxieties of miners in relation to mineral and property rights before the Mabo decision were sometimes based on perceived difficulties with the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976. The author comments on the particular litigious interests in mineral-rich areas including Cape York and Arnhem Land. While the Crown ownership of minerals is secure, miners will still have to deal with native title claims, and accommodate native title holders where claims are upheld. Resolution of contested cases is an essential part of Mabo theory. The author asserts that rights of claim are no better than the evidence used to support them, and rights of defence are no more effective than scrutiny of the evidence is allowed to be. Numerous concerns relating to issues and evidence in contested cases are raised.

The author concludes that so loosely-textured a statement of common law is unlikely to be suitable for normal judicial processes, and
may have been intended as a catalyst for legislation. A number of possible future developments are suggested, some of which have occurred, such as the Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1993* and the establishment of consultation and permission rules for mining applications administered by the National Native Title Tribunal.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from* CAEPR; $6.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, self-identification, remote locations.

According to the author, discussions on census data for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations highlight major problems which lower data quality. One concerns the statistical definition of the populations, which is based on descent and self-identification; population numbers alter according to propensity to identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Another is the undercount of people; the marginal circumstances in which some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live makes them vulnerable to being missed by census enumeration. Reliable estimation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population growth rates has not been possible with past census data. However, because substantial advancement in census field procedures and improvement in coverage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities has been achieved over the years, there was hope that the 1986–91 interval would yield reasonably accurate population growth rates.

Disappointingly, population figures from the 1991 Census show that this is not the case. There are variations in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander growth rates across States and Territories, most of which cannot be justified in terms of natural increase and net migration during the intercensal period 1986–91. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population increased at a rate of 3 per cent per year, whereas the expected
growth rate was 2.5 per cent. The Aboriginal population increased at a rate of 2.9 per cent and the Torres Strait Islander population at 4.3 per cent. The observed intercensal rate of population growth for Torres Strait Islanders is thus one-and-one-half times the Aboriginal growth rate and is high by demographic standards. The data also show higher concentrations of the indigenous populations in metropolitan areas, but this has mainly occurred as a result of the reclassification of Townsville-Thuringowa locality from 'other urban' to 'major urban'.

Key cross-references


Available from
Public Policy Program. The Australian National University.

Geographic area
Non-metropolitan Australia, with an emphasis on the Northern Territory.

Key words
Community development planning, local government, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), poverty, consultation, self-management, self-determination, indigenous autonomy.

Prepared for the RCIADIC, the Report is concerned with the links between indigenous communities and the State and the search for appropriate structures of indigenous local governance. Local governance is the method by which communities can give effect to the distribution of resources provided by governments. The Report examines indigenous communities in non-metropolitan Australia, because it is indigenous people in these areas who are involved in local governance or who form a significant interest group within the mainstream local government councils' structure.

The consultant was required to report on the nature of indigenous participation in local government, take into account the recommendations of other government reports on the topic and comment, in particular, on the system of government in the Northern Territory. The consultant was also required to respond to questions concerning indigenous peoples' relations with local government, including whether indigenous people should participate in local government, or whether there is another way for them to gain access to local government funds. Other questions were: what services
do local governments provide to which indigenous communities do not have access; are there situations in which indigenous people have protected their rights to local government funds by effective participation in local government; and what skills are required for indigenous people to participate effectively in local government.

The Report outlines the history and forms of indigenous local government in the Australian States. It also discusses indigenous management capacity and training, the politics of indigenous leadership and consultation, and other issues related to indigenous self-management. Interagency and intergovernmental coordination, including the Commonwealth’s role in local government and issues and problems of service delivery are also broached. An appendix provides information on local government in North America.

Gerritsen found that the present diverse forms of indigenous self-governance were all acceptable to indigenous communities and that over the past decade, communities have made significant progress in achieving self-management. However, almost all indigenous units of local governance suffer severe fiscal disadvantages relative to comparable mainstream local government authorities. The report recommended that self-management should be a central tenet for redressing indigenous disadvantage; ‘objective’ measures of the indigenous condition should be collected and published at the community level; and, that the Community Development Employment Projects scheme continue to provide training and administrative skill enhancement. The author saw a case for governmental agencies entering into a contract with each indigenous community agency of local governance, which specified the rights and duties of the Council/agency and also an agreed mechanism of performance evaluation. However, Gerritsen felt that governments should accept a degree of non-conformity in the running of local government in the interests of indigenous self-management.

**Key cross-references**


Available from
Housing and Infrastructure Section, ATSIC; free publication.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.
Key words
Housing funding, ATSIC, government programs.

The Home Ownership Scheme, operated by ATSIC over the last 17 years, lends money to indigenous families; it is returned in the form of repayments, payments of interest, and mortgage discharges. In the last three financial years, the amount of loan repayments has been $5 million more than the amount of new loans from ATSIC.

An alternative housing scheme to the above is an interest subsidy scheme, as proposed by the Coalition's *Fightback* manifesto. Money would be lent to Aboriginal families from banks and a subsidy would be paid to banks because their interest rates are higher than ATSIC's. There would be little difference between the two schemes from the point of view of ATSIC's clients. The major difference between the two schemes would be the net amounts of income for ATSIC, or expenditure by ATSIC. In the first year of operation, to provide 300 loans at an average of $80,000 the interest subsidy scheme would produce an income of $25.8 million for ATSIC compared with $4.3 million from continuation of the existing scheme. In the interest subsidy scheme the income to ATSIC would come from indigenous families with existing loans, and would be about $40–50 million in the first two years of the operation of the interest subsidy scheme. The two schemes would operate at the same time. The income from the present ATSIC Home Ownership Scheme would gradually decline, but meanwhile the subsidy scheme would make very significant 'savings' for ATSIC.

Neither the existing scheme nor the interest subsidy scheme described above, make use of ATSIC's large asset holding of existing mortgages (totalling $168 million at June 1992). Such assets could be used to raise funds as loan security; and by selling the mortgages while continuing to manage them. This sale would potentially generate large amounts of disposable income for continuing housing operations and could be operated with an interest subsidy component. This alternative could generate an estimated $56 million in the first year and about one-fifth of that amount in the subsequent year.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR: $6.
This discussion paper presents indicative projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population for a 20-year period from 1991. The 1991 base population has been reconstructed after adjusting for data problems evident in the age distribution of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the 1991 Census count. The projection assumes zero net migration and accepts moderate declines evident between 1986 and 1991 in indigenous people's fertility and mortality. While recognising data problems associated with changing identification, the projections show that the indigenous population will increase at an annual rate of 2.5 per cent during the 1991–96 period, exceeding 300,000 by 1996, several years earlier than previously forecast. The rate of growth of the population is estimated to decline in each of the subsequent five-year periods to about 1.9 per cent by the 2006–11 projection period. Assuming moderate declines in fertility and mortality, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is estimated to be about 416,000 in the year 2011. The decline in fertility during the projection period, assumed to take place at a modest rate, will reduce the relative size of the child population and will consequently effectively reduce the economic dependency burden on the working-age population, however questionable the concept of a working-age population may be in a social context of economic marginalisation. This reduction in dependency burden will be slightly offset by an increased aged population, although in absolute terms the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged over 65 years will remain comparatively small. The working-age population is expected to rise over the 20-year projection period emphasising the need for policies and programs targeted to meet the specific needs of a growing adult population, particularly young adults.
**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population counts, government policy.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have a population history marked by the initial effects of dispossession, depopulation and dispersal and the subsequent effects of discriminatory policies and economic marginalisation. While the demographic structure and growth path of the Aboriginal population continues to be determined by its history to a considerable extent, the emerging structural characteristics of the population have major implications for the nature of problems that affect its members.

Data from the 1991 Census largely confirm earlier projections of the size and structure of the Aboriginal population, although the data for Torres Strait Islanders are markedly inconsistent with previous counts. The 1986 and 1981 Censuses mark the first intercensal period for decades for which Aboriginal population counts have been consistent. This provides an opportunity to examine closely the discrepancies between projections and the 1991 Census and to comment on ways in which determinants of Aboriginal population change are diverging from the parameters used for previous projections.

Gray and Tesfaghiorghis pay particular attention to mortality prospects because of the occurrence in the 1991 Census of a higher than expected sex ratio and differences between projections and counts for certain age groups. They note the evidence for under-enumeration of the Aboriginal population in particular age groups in the 1991 Census as in previous censuses, and estimate the size of adjustments necessary to correct for some, though not for all, of these deficiencies. The authors alter their previous assumptions about the direction of Aboriginal fertility change as the analysis shows that, in most parts of Australia, Aboriginal fertility increased in the second half of the 1980s. They suggest that more attention needs to be paid to the apparent and perhaps diverging differences in basic demographic perimeters for geographical sections of the Aboriginal population, as the analysis identified more variation between the States in both fertility and mortality rates than in the 1986–91 period. The authors point out that the Aboriginal population is continuing to transform into a population with a vastly increased proportion of people at young and middle adult ages, with implications for social policy and programs.

**Key cross-references**

*Available from*
Libraries.

*Geographic area*
Australia-wide with emphasis on South Australia.

*Key words*
Mabo, native title, land rights, pastoral leases, mineral resources – rights, compensation.

This paper analyses the Mabo decision by the High Court, attempting to dispel misconceptions in relation to Mabo and urging against overly hasty legislation.

Three major areas of concern about Mabo are identified: the question of the validity of interest in land granted after 31 October 1975, when the Racial Discrimination Act (RDA) came into effect; the problem of identifying the incidents of native title; and the issue of compensation. Features of the Mabo decision are outlined, including the general principles involved in claiming for native title. The question of what is native title is addressed: the term is not necessarily a title to land but a description of various potential native rights determined by Aboriginal law and custom. The extinguishment of native title is dealt with in detail. The author believes that given the wide spectrum of interests in land, an assessment of whether those interests affect native title should depend on a consideration of the particular facts of each case, not on a legislative solution which would be unlikely to sensitively balance those interests. Interests granted under the *South Australian Mining Act 1971* are examined as an example, with opinion offered on whether native title might be extinguished by the granting of interests ranging from licenses to leases. The RDA and issues surrounding its operation and possible application in relation to extinguishment of native title leads to the subject of interference compensation. Holders of native title would have the same access to this compensation as all owners of land under the mining and petroleum laws of the States by virtue of the RDA.

The author claims that, through earlier decisions based on the RDA, mechanisms are in place to apply the principles of Mabo to achieve a fair balance between the interests of indigenous and other Australians more effectively than relying on hastily conceived legislation.

*Key cross-references*

Available from
CEPR; free publication.

Geographic area
Australia and the United States of America (US).

Key words
Government policy, labour market programs, employment, income, labour market, welfare system.

During the 1980s labour market conditions for low-skilled, low-paid men deteriorated in Australia and the US. In each environment it might be thought that indigenous men would fare badly as they tend to be over-represented among the unskilled and have found it difficult to find employment. In the declining economic climate of the 1980s in Australia, however, it was a government priority to improve the economic wellbeing of indigenous people; by 1990 the spending on indigenous programs totalled more than the income indigenous people earned from employment. Economy-wide forces were also working against indigenous people in the US but government made no attempt to offset them. The authors suggest that comparison of the economic wellbeing of indigenous men in these two countries can provide insight into the extent to which large increases in government expenditure can offset adverse labour market trends.

At the beginning of the 1980s the average income of an Australian indigenous male was 50.5 per cent of his white counterpart; in the US this ratio was 58.3 per cent. By the end of the decade the relative income position of the two indigenous groups had reversed. The indigenous Australian income ratio increased by 10 per cent and that of Native American men fell 17 per cent. Indigenous Australian men gained approximately 30 per cent relative to Native Americans. The source of this large change appears to lie in Australian Government initiatives and substantial increases in expenditure directed towards indigenous people and not in differences in the impact of general economic factors on the labour market of the low-skilled. Both indigenous groups were required to swim against a strong economic current; one moved forward, the other slipped back.

An important outcome of the comparison is that it is clear that it is not only through targeted expenditure that government affects the
economic wellbeing of indigenous people. The generosity of the welfare system as this applies to all men, and labour market regulations which influence labour market relativities for the low-paid, crucially affect outcomes for indigenous people through effects on income inequality. Experience suggests that the Australian welfare system and labour market regulations compress income distribution, and as a result low-paid workers are better off economically. The authors estimate that if, due to labour market deregulation, Australian income dispersion widened to that of the US, Australian indigenous men would lose 28 per cent of their income. This is after allowing for the increased employment that might flow from lower wages.

Key cross-references


Available from
Faculty of Law, NTU; S25.

Geographic area
Northern Territory.

Key words
Fishing, government legislation, access to resources, enterprises, income, economic self-sufficiency, self-determination.

This paper outlines the nature of Northern Territory fisheries, their management and indigenous involvement with them. Most participation by indigenous people is through subsistence fishing allowed under the Fisheries Act. The Act does not, however, entitle traditional fisherman to engage in commercial fishing without a commercial fishing licence.

The Northern Territory Division of Primary Industry and Fisheries (DPIF) has conducted a number of fisheries training projects with coastal Aboriginal communities. A fishing project including vessels and a processing plant was established at Maningrida around 1970, but it had failed by 1972. Training projects have been established in Port Keats (Wadeye), Bathurst and Melville Islands (Nguiu, Pularumpi, Milikapiti), Murganella, Croker Island (Mingilang), Goulburn Island (Warrawi), Maningrida, Millingimbi, Elcho Island (Galiwinku), Yirrkala, Lake Evella
(Gapuwiyak), Umbukumba, Numbulwar, Ngukurr, and the Edward Pellow Islands. A number of small commercial ventures on other parts of the coast have met with varying success, but in most cases the lack of full-time advisers has resulted in a limited interest. Other problems have included distance from markets and lack of facilities for processing. DPIF provides an extension service to support fishing activities from subsistence through to commercial operations. Indigenous people have found some aspects of commercial fishing licenses onerous to operate, such as submitting monthly returns. To resolve the problem a new Aboriginal fishing licence was introduced to allow fish caught with amateur fishing gear to be supplied to the community. This has recently been changed so that the fish can be sold to the community.

The Arnhem Land coast has considerable unutilised resources. Recent discussions with people in East Arnhem Land indicate that there is significant interest in commercial fishing ventures by local communities. Current involvement in licensed commercial activities by indigenous people includes ownership of licenses or partnerships in licenses in the pearlling industry, and the barramundi, trepang, mud crab, mollusc and coastal line fisheries.

**Key cross-references**


Available from CRES; $25.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Sustainable development, hunting and gathering, conservation, self-sufficiency, resource management, research, enterprises, employment, tourism.

Many traditional people have an appreciation of ecological processes and the need to limit exploitation if environmental degradation or local species extinction is not to occur, according to Healey. However, there are problems with using traditional ecological knowledge more widely as it
generally relates to circumscribed communities and regions and sets of ecological processes, whereas programs of conservation encompass a broader view of the environment. Also, tradition-based knowledge does not separate the mundane and the mystical or sacred aspects of knowledge; it is bound up in the cultural system and is integral to the social order. In tradition-based societies the motivation for conservation is more commonly the benefit of individuals or families, whereas modern management philosophy is based on conserving resources for the sake of the viability of larger ecological systems.

Nevertheless, traditional ecological knowledge may provide a sound basis for conservation and resource management. For example, programs of conservation may be based in a locally acceptable means of resource management, based on customary rights of ownership to food resources and access to land. This kind of program does not require alienation of large tracts of land for parks. Also, traditional ecological knowledge can be employed to enhance self-sufficiency. Maintaining a traditional non-monetised subsistence base can enable smallholder families to opt out of commodity production in bad seasons while maintaining their livelihood, occupation of land and capital investment in cash-earning ventures. Thus, arguably, the maintenance of subsistence production is advantageous to the long-term viability of commercial development projects. Traditional ecological knowledge may serve as a basis for the development of cash-earning ventures, where natural resources can be exploited by small-scale producers. Exploitation of wild resources and their sale in local markets can provide a valuable source of cash.

Healey also points out that traditional ecological knowledge has potential for the development of the tourist industry. There is a market for tours which offer brief intensive contact with people of 'traditional cultures' and their environment. Recognition of the importance of traditional ecological knowledge should lead to local communities, the repositories of such knowledge, becoming an integral part of a research programs as consultants rather than as assistants.

Key cross-references


Available from
Commonwealth Government Bookshops; $11.95.
The main goal of the Access and Equity Strategy is to provide equal access to government services for all residents of Australia who face barriers of race, religion, language or culture. The Strategy, begun in 1985 by the Commonwealth Government to improve service provision to migrants of non-English-speaking backgrounds, was extended to cover Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 1989. This was because an evaluation of the Strategy found that the barriers to access and equity were more marked, particularly in the provision of services, in the case of indigenous people.

The terms of reference required that the Inquiry report on the implementation of the Strategy in relation to indigenous people, giving attention to achieved and expected outcomes of the Strategy, barriers to access and equity, and recommendations for overcoming these barriers. The Inquiry was also required to investigate future coordination between Commonwealth departments and ATSIC concerning the achievement of the goals of the regional councils' plans. Indigenous communities and organisations, and Commonwealth Ministers and State and Territory Governments were invited to make written submissions. The Inquiry undertook public hearings across Australia and held informal discussions to determine the effectiveness of the Strategy at the grassroots level.

The Inquiry found that the barriers indigenous people face in gaining full access to, and equity in, a range of government services include racism, language, culture, inappropriately designed and delivered services and lack of services in many areas. Indigenous women, youth, older people, and people with disabilities face extreme disadvantage with respect to government services. Ignorance of indigenous cultures is also a major barrier as this is reflected in government structures for service provision. Coordination and design of programs is also an area of concern. It was concluded that the Access and Equity Strategy is yet to have a significant impact for indigenous peoples. However, the Department of Social Security has made considerable advances; it has introduced successful measures to ensure that indigenous people receive their correct entitlements. Adequate health services were seen as the most urgent area of need. The Inquiry concluded that in the delivery of services and programs, departments and agencies need to take into account the special needs and circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Concern was also expressed that funding from indigenous affairs is being used for provision of services such as sewerage and water provision (which should
be provided by mainstream agencies) instead of being used to address other areas of indigenous disadvantage and promoting self-management.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*
University Co-operative Bookshop; $35.

**Geographic area**
Kimberley region, Western Australia.

**Key words**
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, employment, income, welfare dependence, poverty, health.

This book is a systematic analysis, by survey, of the sociohistorical and intercultural aspects of health, including mental health, in one area of remote Australia, the Kimberley. Its relevance to economic policy is primarily that it includes information on indigenous people's economic circumstances such as their employment, income and welfare dependence. The survey was generated by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's (CSIRO) Division of Human Nutrition in Adelaide from information furnished by the Health Department of Western Australia. A random sample was produced, stratified by age, sex and location, from which 516 people consented to be interviewed.

The survey demonstrated that in 1991, the indigenous people of the Kimberley were socially and economically disadvantaged. Only 14 per cent of the sample were in paid employment, with the highest proportion being males from 20–50 years of age. Among those over 50 years, only 5 per cent were in paid work. The median monthly income was higher for women than for men ($522 and $462 respectively), and for those of mixed descent compared with those of full descent ($543 and $469 respectively). Sixty-five per cent of the sample were full-descent indigenous people, with the proportion who were of mixed descent increasing from 23 per cent of those over 70 years, to 56 per cent of those 16–20 years. The difference by descent reflected not only higher rates of employment (28 per cent versus 6 per cent), but also higher incomes for those working ($1,130 for mixed descent and $520 for full descent indigenous people). According to Hunter, the differences by descent reflect opportunity (people of mixed descent being more likely to live in towns where there are more opportunities for
employment, education and skills development) and the differences by sex reflect the way the structuring of the welfare system privileges women with children.

The employment profile of indigenous people in the Kimberley is one of late entry into paid employment, high unemployment rates which are often chronic and interspersed with menial work, and early exit from the workforce. Although the sample did select a number of quite wealthy individuals, indigenous people of the Kimberley, by and large, are poor.

Key cross-references


Available from
IAD; free publication.

Geographic area
Central Australia.

Key words
Economic development, taxation, indigenous organisations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

The report contains the contributions of students on the topics of population, labour force participation, unemployment, and the monetary contribution of indigenous organisations and workers to the Central Australian economy. Nearly one in three people living in Central Australia is Aboriginal, including permanent and non-permanent residents. About 60 per cent of the Central Australian permanent resident population is indigenous, making them potential key players in the economy of the region. In Australia as a whole, indigenous people comprise less than 3 per cent of the total population. Indigenous participation in the labour force was 37 per cent, and for the total population, 66 per cent. In Alice Springs the indigenous participation rate was slightly higher at 42.2 per cent compared with 72.3 for the total population. The unemployment rate in Central Australia was 28.5 per cent. This rate was slightly lower in Alice Springs (25.5 per cent) than for the regional area (30.6 per cent). The Northern Territory unemployment rate was 25.8 per cent.
The paper provides information on the aggregate income and expenditure of some indigenous organisations in Central Australia. These are the Central Land Council, IAD, Tangentyere Council, Yipirinyu school and the Central Australian Media Association. Aggregate income for these organisations in 1992–93 was $20,986,938. Grants and subsidies from ATSIC, the Department of Employment, Education and Training and other government departments are the main source of income for these organisations, providing 58.7 per cent of income in 1992–93. The aggregate expenditure of the five organisations was over $18 million, with nearly $13.6 million paid in wages to indigenous and non-indigenous employees. This indicates that Aboriginal organisations are major contributors to the Central Australian economy.

Tangentyere Council and IAD provided information on their tax returns. Because most indigenous organisations provide services on a non-profit basis, they are exempt from many taxes. This leaves wages and salaries tax as the main tax arising from indigenous organisations, amounting to nearly $2 million in 1992–93 for these two indigenous organisations. The report concludes that it is clear that the Central Australian population, through its indigenous organisations, make an important contribution to the Central Australian economy.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $20.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Housing need, government policy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

The monograph presents a quantitative assessment of the housing requirements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people revised from a consultancy report prepared for ATSIC. It makes available, for the first time, national estimates of the housing need of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and the regional variations between States and
Territories and the 36 ATSIC regional councils. It also provides a measure of relative need compared to the non-indigenous population, as well as the change over time between 1986 and 1991 with intercensal analysis. It will thus be an essential document for all policy makers and program managers in the housing arena at Commonwealth, State and Territory, regional and local levels, providing a baseline from which to assess indigenous housing need and a guide to resource allocation.

Jones points out that although the housing requirements of indigenous Australians are not qualitatively identical to those of other Australians, and the cultural diversity in which indigenous Australians live has a marked impact on the nature of their housing need, policy makers need a baseline from which to assess the global extent of need in both housing unit and dollar terms. Also, ATSIC requires some basis on which to make decisions about regional variations in housing need as a guide to resource allocation. Quantitative variation in housing need will also be of strategic significance in any bilateral funding agreements made between ATSIC and the States and Territories when arrangements are being made to meet funding shortfalls.

The author says that the relationship between poverty and housing need is a much more pressing concern for indigenous Australians than for the population as a whole because the indigenous population are more than twice as likely to be in after-housing poverty. Without access to low cost housing in appropriate places, indigenous people share their dwellings with consequent effects on the level of overcrowding. In remote locations improvised housing provides an alternative. Twenty-one per cent of indigenous families and 60 per cent of adults who share family housing are inadequately housed. While indigenous people living in urban areas are clearly disadvantaged in their housing status relative to non-indigenous people, they are significantly less disadvantaged than the rural indigenous population. In the period 1986–91 there was no reduction in the backlog of housing need of indigenous Australians. The rate of access to government housing was well below the level of population growth, resulting in a shift of the indigenous population into other rented housing, and possibly into indigenous community-based housing.

Key cross-references


Available from
Out of print; available in libraries.
This document announces the highlights of the 1994–95 Commonwealth Government budget. The focus is on labour market programs, families and health. In relation to indigenous people, the document announces the Commonwealth Government will take further steps towards achieving social and economic justice for them. Assistance is provided for indigenous Australians in response to the Native Title Act 1993: the Government will establish a National Land Fund, costing $200 million in 1994–95 and $124 million per annum thereafter. The Government will also fund health, housing and infrastructure, costing around $500 million over five years.

The document points out that while there has been a fall in the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander unemployment, indigenous people are still almost three times more likely to be unemployed than other Australians. Nearly 60 per cent of unemployed indigenous people have been out of work for more than 12 months. Projections of the age distribution of the indigenous populations indicate large increases in the working-age population. In 1991, there were 153,000 indigenous Australians of working age, which will increase to 200,000 by the year 2000. Without intervention to address unemployment, they are likely to fall even further behind the general population.

The Social Justice Statement states that indigenous people will benefit significantly from the Jobs Compact, both through the provision of extra employment assistance and the increased focus on meeting individual needs through case management. Case management will be further enhanced by the use of non-government case managers, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies. Indigenous people will be eligible for Jobs Compact places on the same basis as other long-term unemployed job-seekers. Participation in the CDEP scheme will count towards eligibility for the Jobs Compact. It is estimated that from 1996–97 approximately 25,850 places in mainstream labour market programs will be filled each year by indigenous job seekers, at a cost of $110 million. The New Work Opportunities program will benefit indigenous people by providing employment in rural areas, where the government is funding specific measures addressing the needs of indigenous Australians. Additional places will be created in the Training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders program, and other programs, costing $42 million over four years. Also, $109 million will be provided over four years for the expansion of the CDEP scheme and the Community Economic Initiatives
scheme. The Budget also includes funding for the employment and training needs of indigenous people leaving detention.

Key cross-references


Available from
Libraries.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Mabo, native title, property rights, land rights, economic development, resources.

This is an introduction to a Policy Forum comprising four papers which examine economic issues arising from the Mabo decision, written before the Native Title Act was passed. The message from this forum is the need to minimise the transactions costs of establishing this ethically-derived distribution of property rights.

Using welfare economics theory as a starting point, the concept of a pareto efficient allocation is discussed, which is an allocation of goods and services which cannot make anyone better off without making someone else worse off. This concept assumes an initial endowment of resources and the outcome, in a competitive market, is considered to be the desirable 'welfare maximum'. This outcome depends on a clearly defined and stable set of property rights; uncertainty about property rights is the primary economic issue raised by Mabo. Papers written for the Policy Forum argue that the establishment of native title and its content are not clearly defined.

The second major economic issue raised by the Mabo decision is the alteration of the distribution of income and wealth in Australia. While it is sometimes argued that native title may reduce economic development by restricting access to land and reducing the maximum economic yield, economic theory does not support this argument as it ignores the economic value that indigenous Australians might place on the quiet enjoyment of land for their own purposes. Indigenous Australians are not necessarily anti-economic development; however to reap economic benefits native title holders may need the right of exchange. A major feature of Mabo is that
native title is inalienable. According to Kenyon, it is unlikely that native title will have any great effect on the economic status of indigenous Australians: the maximum amount of land that could be subject to native title is quite small, and in the past the impact of statutory land and resources rights on the economic status of all indigenous Australians has been limited.

The author concludes that the Native Title Bill proposed by the government will be an ethical and not an economic judgment about the distribution of property rights in Australia. The major economic issue raised by the Mabo decision is the need to minimise the transactions costs of establishing this ethically-derived distribution of property rights.

Key cross-references


Available from
NARU; $5.

Geographic area
Cape York, Queensland.

Key words
Mining, development, indigenous marginalisation, equity, conservation.

A concerted developmental push began on Cape York in the 1980s. There are currently several large resource development proposals including large mining ventures, an aluminium smelter, a commercial spaceport, an airforce base and tourist resorts. There are also some national park proposals. This paper examines the process of resource development on Cape York Peninsula. Two case studies, a mining and a resort proposal, evaluate the capacity of the development approval process to accommodate the interests of local indigenous people. They reveal that planning and impact assessment procedures tend to empower the dominant interests of State and capital, while indigenous interests have been considered peripheral or disregarded. Through case studies Lane examines the manner in which competing interests in the same resource operate.

One of the case studies is Shellbourne Bay, where a consortium applied to mine the silica-rich dunefields in 1985. Shellbourne Bay is an area of high conservation value and it also contains many traditional dreaming sites, marine and other resources of the Wuthathi Aboriginal people. It thus presents a typical scenario for conflict among interested
parties. The decision-making process in relation to the project involved a hearing at which all relevant information was supposed to be considered. However, the hearing failed to recognise the continuing interest of the Wuthathi people. An environmental impact statement (EIS) was prepared subsequent to the recommendation of the Mining Warden that the lease be granted. As no anthropological survey work was included in this, the EIS also failed to represent the Wuthathi people and thus denied them any interest in the Shellbourne Bay area. Although the anthropological research should have been carried out by the developer, the Wuthathi sought and obtained Commonwealth funds for it to be undertaken and included in the EIS. However, the final EIS remained intransigent to the indigenous perspective. The project was eventually stopped by the Commonwealth ostensibly on environmental grounds. Lane's other case study, the proposed resort development at Lockhart River which also failed to eventuate, shows a similar lack of commitment to the participation and rights of indigenous people.

Key cross-references


Available from
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies; $16.95.

Geographic area
Cape York, Queensland.

Key words
Cape York Land Council (CYLC), self-government, self-determination, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission – regional councils, local government relations, tourism, mining.

Aboriginal self-government is a matter of serious concern to the CYLC, the Council of Elders who govern the land council, the Peninsula Regional Council which has assisted in keeping the land council functioning since 1990, and the Aboriginal owners of Cape York. Aboriginal owners of Cape York believe that Aboriginal self-government is not a new concept; it has always existed, despite the disruption of historical colonialism and the new colonial strategies.
There are two types of local government jurisdiction in Cape York. The first type is the Aboriginal jurisdiction, consisting of Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) lands owned and governed by Aboriginal councils, and the Aurukun Shire Council lease given in 1978 in conjunction with grants of mining leases. The second is the non-Aboriginal jurisdiction of the Cook Shire Council which extends over the remainder of Cape York. While the Cook Shire Council has effective responsibility for all land areas outside DOGITs and shire leases, it has failed to negotiate with Aboriginal councils in Cape York on the provision of essential services such as roads. There are large discrepancies between levels of Queensland Local Government Grants Commission funding per capita for the Cook Shire Council and funding for Aboriginal areas.

This situation is further complicated by claims for land being made on behalf of Aboriginal people. The CYLC has attempted to implement some of the more important land policies of the Peninsula Regional Council. Negotiations with several distinct sectors on Cape York have resulted in important successes such as tourism regulation. Negotiation with the mining sector in Cape York has not been successful; other sections of the mining industry have indicated that they are willing to negotiate on a native title premise, but are not yet operating on Cape York. The state government and mining companies refuse to negotiate with Aboriginal people on such critical issues as mining and tourism, codes of conduct, and wider negotiations of principle. As a result, such matters are forced into the courts, wasting money over issues which are amenable to negotiation and agreement. The CYLC stands between traditional owners of Cape York and developers to ensure that their interests are protected; the author believes its capacity to influence events has been significant and also that it will continue to be important.

Key cross-references.


Available from
NARU; $5.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.
Key words
Community development planning, self-determination, self-management, self-government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

According to the authors, community development is a process whereby a community empowers itself to initiate and sustain its own betterment. Community development planning can create opportunities for communities to control their own change and development and to shape and deliver their own services in ways that suit them; it embraces self-government in the political domain, self-management in the administrative domain and self-sufficiency in the economic domain. Community development planning has the potential to provide the desired change, especially in small rural communities, because people place a high degree of emphasis on self-determination and exercising greater control over those aspects of their lives which they consider to be vital to their survival and development as a people.

Lea and Wolfe say that if institutions and organisations try to implement programs with their own sets of procedures, expectations and overly sophisticated techniques the result will be failure. Inevitably, in such cases, there will be an uneasy relationship between the communities trying to implement programs and government departments and other large agencies trying to encourage, support and impose the programs. Community development planning will only work if departments can adopt flexible, relaxed, multifaceted approaches that do not demand strict time frames, measurable indices of satisfactory performance, uniform procedures and endless accounting and reporting procedures. The implementation of community development planning also demands a well trained cadre of patient facilitators who can work with the communities. It also requires agencies to resist attempting to make community development planning fit existing bureaucratic practices. The authors argue that whilst none of the above is impossible, it is asking a lot of departments like ATSIC, itself under criticism for loose procedures, lack of results and wasting funds. This all points to the need for increasing devolution of responsibility and for community autonomy and self-determination.

Key cross-references

Available from
Libraries.

Geographic area
Torres Strait, with reference to other remote areas of Australia.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) regional councils, self-government, regional planning, environmental planning, native title.

A new national regional planning system for indigenous Australians was introduced through ATSIC in 1992. The significance of this national indigenous administration network has been heightened by the Mabo decision and the Native Title Act 1993, as indigenous groups may secure new revenues from mining and other resources which will provide a measure of economic autonomy. The regional planning exercise is affected by a number of factors including the great diversity between regions, the capacity of the new regional councils to undertake regional analysis, the role of consultation, the interaction between local and regional plans, and issues of distributional equity. The task involves expressing broad community objectives despite the fact that the agenda may be limited to basic needs within a limited budget.

The Torres Strait region is the primary focus of this paper. Torres Strait Islanders have demanded greater autonomy for some time, on the basis of their special regional location and their status as an ethnically distinct group. Regional planning has been developing since 1988, culminating in the establishment of the Torres Strait Regional Authority in July 1994. A primary achievement of the regional planning experience in Torres Strait has been the setting up of a consultative process with other key government service providers at Federal, State and local levels, as well as with other private sector bodies representing commercial and welfare interests. Additionally, regional plans provide scope for the practical expression of attempts to develop environmental management guidelines in the region. Finally, changes are being introduced in both the conduct of regional council affairs and the activities of ATSIC branch office staff, as Regional Councillors address issues in terms of development guidelines and the challenge of data collection and analysis for the preparation of plans are addressed.
**Key cross references**


Available from NARU; $8.

**Geographic area**
Aurukun, Queensland.

**Key Words**
Self-determination, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

This is the report of a consultancy undertaken for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) to assess and facilitate the capacities of community development planning in Aurukun. To undertake the research the consultants visited Aurukun, and Leveridge lived in the township and the adjacent homelands for five months.

The consultants outline the history of Aurukun: a history of indigenous people's resistance to externally created and supported institutions such as mission and Shire. Opposition to the Shire began with passive resistance and continued with support for outstation development which the Shire and the Queensland Government attempted to stop. The Shire Council leases all land in the Shire area and has control of most assets. It is also responsible for the rental housing occupied by the indigenous population. Furthermore, a CDEP scheme gives the Shire considerable power over the labour of the population. Aurukun's indigenous people suffer lack of employment, overcrowding and high levels of alcoholism. The report looks at the structural impediments to change in Aurukun and to people gaining control over their circumstances.

Leveridge and Lea's recommendations are that: an arts development officer be employed in Aurukun to foster artistic endeavour in line with Queensland Government policy on development of the arts. Aboriginal people should be trained for, and employed in, the delivery of all arts services. Also, ATSIC should consider suspending the CDEP scheme with the Shire until the indigenous participants can have greater confidence that their involvement is for the benefit of the local community. Also needed is support for the victims of drinking along with a new body with clear policy on ways to control alcohol outlets and profits from the sales of alcohol.
A comprehensive set of guidelines for essential services to outstations should be negotiated, according to the authors, especially in relation to health and education. These guidelines should be used to assess funding needs and be incorporated into a regional development plan supported in capital works programs. A regional plan with greater indigenous input than can be offered by the existing Shire's structure is required to identify possibilities for decentralisation. A halt should be placed on the construction of new housing in the overcrowded town, and strategies developed to achieve reduction in the population of the immediate Aurukun town area. A new model of local government should be discussed in community consultations: the consultants suggest a bicameral system where indigenous elders form a body of review and the Shire Council continues to deliver local government services.

Key cross-references


Available from
University Co-operative Bookshop; $16.95.

Geographic area
Torres Strait.

Key words
Sea rights, self-management, ecologically sustainable development, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), economic development.

Lui states that Australia is responsible to the world for its policies towards Torres Strait Islanders. Australians continue to think that indigenous Australians are people whose lands, seas and lives are matters for the convenience of the States and Territories in which they live. Lui says that Torres Strait Islanders live with the effluents of mines, new development projects and international shipping polluting their waters. When Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders express concern to government about standards of pollution control, they are told that Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and world shipping are immune to Australian policy and interference; governments and fishermen from outside the region deny their rights and claim control of their resources. Although Torres Strait Islanders believe that the islands and reefs of the Torres Strait are theirs, a view
partially confirmed by the High Court’s Mabo decision, they have almost no power to manage and protect them. Nor do they receive the economic benefit which they provide to others. For these reasons they believe that the growing tendency of the international community to recognise indigenous rights is important. The United States and Canada both have recent policies which recognise that indigenous peoples have first rights to fisheries and marine livelihoods, while here in Australia, people are still debating whether Torres Strait Islanders and Aborigines have any rights to a role in coastal and marine areas. North American Indians and Canadian Inuit, because of their intimate knowledge of marine ecosystems, have worked with their governments on environmental protection and conservation legislation. Torres Strait Islanders can offer Australia this knowledge.

The recent Marine Strategy for Torres Strait focuses on proper coastal management, with a commitment to ecologically sustainable development. Australia tries to manage Torres Strait through about 40 official agencies and departments, none of which are accountable to Torres Strait Islanders. Islanders need real control of staff and office budgets, not the appearance of control through ATSIC. Lui says that Torres Strait Islanders are seeking a new political structure to enable them to make decisions for themselves, including their own constitution. This will require a clear and legally enforceable regime of land and sea rights.

**Key cross-references**


**Available from**
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies: $16.95.

**Geographic area**
Torres Strait.

**Key words**
Torres Strait, Torres Strait Regional Authority, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), self-government, regional development, government policy, marine strategy.

The author believes that self-government for Torres Strait by the year 2001 is an achievable vision which will happen. A regional development study
has shown that while politically it was possible to become more independent, economically there were very limited resources that could create an economic base. In the meantime, however, ATSIC and regional councils were created, and a regional development plan established. The Mabo decision further facilitated the move towards self-government. Currently three organisations are working towards a common objective: the Island Coordinating Council (the operation of which has set a precedent for self-government), the Regional Council and the Torres Strait Council. According to Lui, these organisations should be dissolved and replaced by the newly created Torres Strait Authority. Although the Torres Strait Authority should remain within the ATSIC framework and Act, the long-term aim is to become independent of ATSIC whilst still working in conjunction with it, maintaining close links with Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal people on the mainland.

Lui says that governments should talk to Torres Strait Islander people in their own country rather than developing policies on their behalf; policy should fit in with Torres Strait culture and needs. Torres Strait Islanders are ready to negotiate from a position of strength: they have developed, for example, a marine strategy to ensure resources are not over-exploited, and a public sector training strategy to ensure their people are trained for middle and senior management levels of the public and private sectors. More generally, the main principle of economic independence is the achievement of a better quality of life for all people in the region.

Key cross-references


Available from
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies; $16.95.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Self-government, self-determination, self-sufficiency, royalties, mining, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).
Mansell states that what we have in Australia is open access to the resources of Aboriginal lands. As a result, white Australia has generated enormous wealth and indigenous people are left to ask for a handout. He says that he has been critical of governments for this, but that indigenous people's response to this has also been poor. Indigenous people have allowed the important economic and social decisions to be made elsewhere and have not seriously challenged the right of government to appropriate these resources. Instead, indigenous people have been intent on challenging the allocation that comes to them.

The author says that the best way to provide the power for indigenous self-government is to build it into the Australian constitution. Under self-government indigenous communities would control themselves and have absolute authority over their local territories. Indigenous people in these communities would want to make their own laws, police themselves, and have the right to negotiate economic arrangements on their lands. Indigenous communities would make broad instead of limited decisions at the local level.

Mansell suggests that a practical step towards self-government is for communities to negotiate funding from the Commonwealth Government. This would circumvent the ATSIC structure and State and local governments. Communities could then develop programs, creating a future based on the needs of that local community. Also, the Commonwealth Government should accept that there must be uniform rights for indigenous people across Australia and to this end should take up the positive principles of the Northern Territory Land Rights Act which enables indigenous communities to negotiate arrangements for their own benefit. It is inevitable that greater control will go to indigenous communities. The issue is the shape and form of that control. Whether indigenous people are preparing for self-government or whether they take self-government as a stepping stone towards full Aboriginal government remains to be seen, according to Mansell.

Key cross-references


Available from
NARU; S25.
According to Marshall, royalties are the most important means available to Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory to improve their socioeconomic and political status. The appropriate structures for handling royalty moneys are Aboriginal-controlled organisations with guidelines and policies in place which assist them in maintaining a balance between consumption and investment, between distribution and accumulation. Current structures for handling royalty and negotiated moneys in the Northern Territory are outlined.

After extensive consultation with the communities involved, the Central Land Council (CLC) established the Ngurratjuta Association in 1985 to handle the 30 per cent affected-community royalty moneys derived from the Mereenie and Palm Valley oil and gas mining operations. The structure of the Association is outlined. The constitution provides for community purposes expenditure only, with no payments to be made to individuals; because the total negotiated payments were being paid in cash to traditional owners, the CLC wanted to ensure that at least the statutory royalties were spent on the community. A policy was implemented of investing half of all royalty income in long-term investments, some made with funding assistance from the Aboriginals Benefit Trust Account, the Aboriginal Development Corporation and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. The remaining half is paid on a per capita basis into community and outstation trust accounts held by the Association to be used for community purposes. These investments, which are listed, represent a commitment to the goal of changing the structural position of the Association's membership in the political economy of Central Australia, despite low and erratic royalty income from some areas. The Association also operates an accounting service, an outstations resource centre, and provides support to various community-based enterprises within the area. The development of mechanisms to distribute negotiated payments, and the continuing difficulties in this area, are discussed. According to the author, such mechanisms should be appropriate and consistent, as uncertainty undermines trust in these matters. The CLC is commended on continuing to attempt to improve the structures that are in place.

Suggestions for the future are that this opportunity for Aboriginal people to change their socioeconomic status and improve the quality of life of future generations must not be allowed to pass and a vision of the economic future shared by royalty associations, land councils and government is needed if royalties are to be used widely. Although there is considerable freedom in the use of royalties these must be used
responsibly; the Commonwealth has a moral obligation to ensure that Aboriginal people continue to receive statutory royalty equivalent payments. Finally, royalties must not become a substitute for government funding of basic services.

Key cross-references


Available from
University Co-operative Bookshop; $29.95.

Geographic area
Queensland.

Key words
Employment, enterprises, cattle industry, land rights, self-determination, outstations movement, national parks - ownership, management.

The book recounts the role of indigenous people's labour in the Queensland cattle industry. While station work allowed some indigenous people to care for their traditional land, it was land that they no longer owned. The impact of equal pay in the 1970s and land management issues in the 1990s are also covered. Currently, indigenous people in Queensland are engaged in the cattle industry on the same basis as other workers. More recently, some indigenous people have been able to live on their land by means of the outstations movement, the management of national parks and the purchase of cattle stations. The history of State and Federal government backing for the purchase of properties is outlined. Although the properties acquired were often run down, their new indigenous owners were generally expected to operate them at a profit. The average cash income of pastoral properties in the Northern Territory in 1991–92 was only $17,000 and this was projected to fall to $4,600 in 1992–93. Most purchases of cattle properties and leases have required high levels of financial assistance. With escalating unemployment rates throughout the 1980s and 1990s it was hoped that the acquisition of land would create employment but most young indigenous people, have no experience with cattle and are reluctant to work on these remote properties.

The outstations movement in the early 1980s saw indigenous people moving away from settlements in search of economic independence and autonomy and to reestablish their ties with their traditional country. Small herds were established to supplement the diet, and the extensive land base
enabled them to tap traditional subsistence resources. In 1986 there were 480 people living in 13 communities in the Gulf and Cape York Peninsula areas. The Commonwealth Government facilitated this by adopting more flexible social security payments, granting land rights and a policy of self-determination. The Queensland Government was less supportive; however 1985 legislation permitted the granting of leases on Deed of Grant in Trust land to 'qualified persons'. Recent 1991 Queensland legislation made provision for traditional owners to claim national parks. However, granting of title to parks gazetted as claimable is subject to the condition that they be leased back to in perpetuity to the crown, and there is no guarantee that indigenous people will have a majority on the board of management of national parks.

Fifteen thousand indigenous people live in or near the listed area of Commonwealth and Queensland Governments' (1990) joint management scheme for the Queensland Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. They found themselves excluded from management decisions and formed the Rainforest Aboriginal Network which has fought for new legislation that will give them joint management of the area.

Key cross-references


Available from Libraries.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Mabo, native title, property rights, mineral resources – rights, economic development and resources, land rights, compensation.

Property rights are at the centre of any consideration of the economic implications of native title and the Mabo decision. This contribution to the 'Policy Forum on Mabo' outlines the difference between a legal perspective on property rights, based on a consideration of ethical and moral issues, and an economic perspective, based on ensuring resources go towards their most valued use. Most valued use does not necessarily equate with
economic efficiency or wealth maximisation but rather the value that any person places on a use of the land, be it quiet enjoyment or mining.

The existing complex system of property rights in Australia is described, and the concept of 'right' and its various meanings is examined. Aspects of property law are discussed: it is based on relative rather than absolute title, where litigants need only prove that their title is better than that of other parties; and allows for many interests in land which can be sold separately, however onshore minerals are mainly owned by the Crown. Four desirable economic features of a private property system are outlined: all resources should be owned by an identifiable person, persons or corporation; owners should be able to use and exclude others from using the property; property should be freely transferrable and involuntary transfers should not be permitted; and the rules of legal ownership and possession should be stable and certain. Property rights and resource distribution are discussed both in terms of pareto optimality, namely an allocation of resources in which no one can be made better off without someone being made worse off, and in terms of wealth maximisation.

The decision about Aboriginal ownership is a political, not economic, decision. Although continuing uncertainty will have an economic cost, the creation and recognition of differing ownership rights can be efficient when it involves greater flexibility in land use and transfer. While concluding that there are not any economic problems with the Mabo decision that cannot be overcome, the author suggests that the main problems relate to the effect that native title has on existing interests in land and the issue of alienation of native title. If native title cannot be alienated by the people who have the title, overall welfare is reduced because land cannot go to those who value it most. The result could be a paternalistic system where overall welfare would be worsened.

Key cross-references


Available from
Office of Northern Development; free publication.
Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
ATSIC, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), tourism, Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), government programs, funding.

Morony, General Manager, Economic Division, ATSIC outlines the role of ATSIC in securing Aboriginal participation in tourism through current policies and programs. The Federal Cabinet's decision to allocate funding through ATSIC to address a number of the RCIADIC recommendations has resulted in the establishment of advisory committees to develop strategies in the arts, tourism and rural industries, at a cost of $15 million over five years.

The Economic Division of ATSIC has the role of facilitating the economic empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through programs, such as how to use their cultural heritage as an economic base. The Division has recently developed the Community Economic Initiatives Scheme under the AEDP, which has as its focus the establishment of income-generating enterprises which have social and cultural benefits. The scheme provides grant funding to eligible indigenous community organisations.

ATSIC has recently been criticised by a number of indigenous tour operators because it is seen as an agency whose funding is directed at the community level. Financial assistance under s.18 of the Act is only available to corporations or declared organisations and the Act prohibits ATSIC from providing grants of assistance to individual indigenous people. ATSIC is, however, able to assist individual entrepreneurs under the Business Funding Scheme which has assisted in establishing tourist ventures in the past, under s.17 of the Act.

Key cross-references

MULRENNAN, M.E. (MaSTS Coordinator for the Island Coordinating Council (ICC)), with assistance from Jull, P. Sullivan, M. and Hanssen, N. 1993. Towards a Marine Strategy for Torres Strait (MaSTS), North Australian Research Unit (NARU) and the ICC, Darwin, 64pp.

Available from
NARU; $18.
**Geographic area**
Torres Strait.

**Key words**

The development of a Marine Strategy for Torres Strait calls for transition, in the Torres Strait, from an unorganised mixture of policies and programs to a regionally centred comprehensive approach. The authors predict that this transition will be difficult as the perspectives of officials, users, scientists and Islanders must be taken into account, as well as the predicted effects of the Mabo decision.

The authors point out that the environment, as the economic base of Torres Strait, is of no less importance for the long-term future of Islanders than regional and government service delivery. Governments often believe that social programs alone will 'solve' the problems of indigenous peoples, but the experience everywhere in the 'first world' has shown that cultural autonomy, significant measures of self-government, and rights to ownership and management of traditionally used waters and resources are required. Australia has signed international documents and made statements committing itself to a new direction in policy towards indigenous people. Australia has also signed environmental and sustainable development commitments. The Torres Strait is a relatively small region. It can serve Australia as a model for new policy thinking and the removal of indigenous hardships and grievances.

The authors suggest that a workshop on marine opportunities and constraints be held on Thursday Island at which speakers present management options for resources, provide environmental planning guidelines, outline research needs, and advise on Mabo-related action in relation to customary marine tenure. They also suggest that the workshop proceedings should form a basis for a series of management action plans; that an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander environmental resource centre be established to coordinate environmental planning and management activities; and that liaison between the ICC and all other relevant parties such as government departments should take place through this coordinating structure.

**Key cross-references**

Available from
NARU; S24.

**Geographic area**
Torres Strait.

**Key words**
Torres Strait, marine strategy, regional development, resource management, sustainable development, Mabo.

The purpose of the Marine Strategy for Torres Strait is to establish a comprehensive framework for managing the limited resource base of the Torres Strait marine environment, consistent with the needs of indigenous Islanders, ecologically sustainable development, and minimal environmental disturbance. This framework will provide the foundation for future public policy and economic development in the Torres Strait region. The Strategy incorporates responses from the consultation process with two categories of issues arising from community workshops. The first involves issues in existing management and administrative arrangements, particularly the Torres Strait Treaty and implications of the Mabo decision. The second covers environmental and resource management issues. The authors suggest that the process of developing the Marine Strategy is as important as the product itself; the integrity of the process determines the quality of its outcomes which will affect the lives and future of the people of Torres Strait.

Implementation strategies and action plans are outlined. Research and monitoring are an essential component, but must occur within a framework which recognises the value of indigenous knowledge and resource managers. Shared management will be environmentally beneficial and is an inescapable feature of emerging legal and political arrangements; it will be guided by the principles of the Marine Strategy. Integrated resource planning and management are crucial: management of natural resources is presently conducted on a single sector basis, failing to acknowledge that activities in one sector impact on resources in other sectors. This will require reconciliation of differences in objectives in order to optimise resource use; a management model is proposed comprising a Regional Environment and Resource Management Plan and Community Environment and Resource Management Plans for each island community. Marine environmental protection will involve a network of marine protected areas under a multiple use model as embodied in the management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Other significant areas of the
Marine Strategy are public knowledge, international cooperation and periodic evaluation and review.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*  
SPRC; $10.

*Geographic area*  
Australia-wide.

*Key words*  
Government policy, government legislation, employment, training. Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC).

This diary, compiled each year, records changes made in government and social policy legislation in 1992. The main sources of information for entries are departmental press releases, annual reports, and Budget and Budget related papers. It provides a ready reference for researchers and workers in government and service organisations. The chapters in this issue have been drawn from various government departments including the Department of Employment, Education and Training, the Department of Health, Housing and Community Services, and the Department of Social Security. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and its policies and programs are not included in this document.

In relation to indigenous Australians in the economy, the diary notes that in 1992 the Government has provided funding for a major new initiative by the Confederation of Australian Industry. Aboriginal Employment Industry Advisers are to be established in all mainland State capitals and in Darwin, coordinated by a National Aboriginal Employment Development Officer. The aim is to establish long-term ties between employer organisations, employers, indigenous job-seekers and training providers. The Advisers would also establish local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Promotion Committees representing indigenous groups, local employers, government departments and unions, thereby effecting recommendation 309 of the RCIADIC.
Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commercial Development Corporation 1994; Altman, J.C. 1993a; Altman, J.C. and Hawke, A.E. 1993; Taylor, J. 1993b, 1993c.


Available from
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies; $16.95.

Geographic area
Northern Territory.

Key words
Self-government, self-determination, independence, administration, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission.

Since the recent Eva Valley meeting and Tennant Creek Conference it is clear that indigenous people can legitimately begin to talk about self-government for all Aboriginal people, according to Pearce. Self-government involves cutting out the State or Territory Governments. What indigenous people need is to work towards a situation where funding is allocated directly from the Federal Government for most of the functions of Aboriginal life. With control of local government indigenous people can control all the municipal services, and could work towards self-government on a greater scale.

Pearce foresees some areas of difficulty. Aboriginal land under self-government, for example, will be scattered throughout the Northern Territory, leading to problems when dealing with matters like roads, administration and communications. Self-government must succeed on an economic level so that indigenous people can look forward to future independence and escape from welfare dependence, however, neither the present government nor the opposition indicated support for indigenous self-government.

Pearce includes a paper written by Professor R. Mathews which suggests that full recognition between Aboriginal and other Australians requires both the resolution of land rights issues and the introduction of self-government for Aboriginal communities, since these two issues are interdependent. Mathews recommends an immediate start to negotiations aimed at establishing self-government in the Aboriginal lands of the Northern Territory, based on the premise that any newly created self-government remains part of the Australian Federation. The first step would be to negotiate a set of principles which would include matters such as the
extent to which self-government will be territorially based or whether some form of citizenship will be established extending the powers of any self-governing territory beyond its geographic boundaries, and the basis on which responsibility for land tenure and resource management will be handed over to self-governing territories. Other issues included: the constitutional and legal status of self-governing entities; the structure of institutional arrangements for government and public administration in the new entities; the range of legislative powers in the self-governing entities; and the financial arrangements between the self-governing entities.

Key cross-references


Available from
University Co-operative Bookshop; $32.95.

Geographic area
Belyuen, Northern Territory.

Key words
Indigenous people in the economy, nutrition, hunting and gathering, income, government programs, labour force participation, land rights.

The author lived with the Belyuen community, around 225 people, of northern Australia. She says that Belyuen people's identity is drawn from connections between labour, language and landscape. Her findings challenge Western notions of 'productive labour'. Her focus includes Belyuen people's political-economic practice which conflicts with Australian government over control of land.

The 1986 Census showed that 90 per cent of Northern Territory Aboriginal people earned less than the average wage, and more than 60 per cent earned less than half of the average wage. Belyuen falls within this context. The majority of Belyuen people receive government benefits; some have been involved in the CEP. The Council employs 18 people in administration and labouring jobs. Six people are teaching assistants, eight women sell crafts and ten men dance corroborees for tourists at the hotel. All of the Council jobs are held by one family. Although jobs and government benefits have increased, the solvency of Belyuen households has not changed since the early 1980s, partly because electricity charges have been introduced and the Community Council has increased its rental charges on housing. Cultural factors make it difficult for the Council to
collect household rents because the households themselves can't collect rent from 'travelling Aborigines' in their houses. 'Travelling Aborigines' dissociate themselves from any one house and do not see themselves as owing rent, but rather as assisting household heads to keep their houses open, warm and productive.

Povinelli also studied contemporary hunting, fishing and collecting and the kilocalorie contribution of bush foods to the diet for one year. The Belyuen diet consisted of hunted meat and sea mammals as well as bushpalms, potatoes, shellfish, fish, crabs, fruits, nuts and eggs. The author gives information on the time spent on hunting and gathering for each month of the year. Tables in the book chart differences in calorie production and work contribution by gender. Women spend approximately 935 hours per year on hunting, fishing and gathering activities and men spend approximately 234 hours fishing. However, it is store-bought foods such as cereals, sugars, milk, legumes and canned vegetables, nuts and fats which provide the majority of kilocalories consumed. The community also spent a high proportion of their income, obtained from social security benefits, on alcohol. Belyuen people use strategies to obtain a network of debts to extend their finances, and they delay payment in the knowledge that local stores often quickly open and close, thus they may escape paying some of their debts.

Key cross-references


Available from
Out of print; available in libraries.

Geographic area
Australia's coastal zone.

Key words
Coastal zone management, access to resources, native title, fishing, consultation, sea rights.

The Report points out that Australia's 70,000 km coastline supports a mix of ecosystems which provide many of the resources needed for a range of commercial and non-commercial uses. It supports about 86 per cent of Australia's population, including nearly one-half of the indigenous
population. In the last 20 years the zone has seen significant increases in population, tourism growth and other development. The Inquiry was required to examine the integrated management of building, tourism, mariculture and associated development in the zone. It also considered agriculture, fisheries, mineral extraction and exploration and its use by indigenous people. The policies, institutions, regulatory mechanisms and activities of all spheres of government involved in the zone were investigated. The Inquiry utilised submissions, consultations, state case studies, research projects by staff of the Commission, and the reports of consultants.

Evidence to the Inquiry showed that the coastal zone is suffering from the environmental and social stresses of continuing urbanisation. Regulatory responsibility for management of building, marine other terrestrial resources lies primarily with State and local governments, and shows a lack of coordination. Commonwealth and other government legislation, developed to achieve coastal zone management is often not implemented. The Inquiry saw a national approach as necessary and proposed a National Coastal Action Program involving all government and industry groups.

The Inquiry found conflict between governments and the indigenous people of the zone. It recommended that the Council of Australian Governments and indigenous organisations initiate a process whereby traditional hunting, fishing and gathering rights are recognised in legislation and amendments made to laws and regulations to incorporate these. The Inquiry deplored governments' lack of action in response to recommendations of previous inquiries in this regard and recommended that in the event of failure during 1994 to negotiate satisfactory nationwide arrangements the Commonwealth enact legislation to establish national criteria for such rights. The Inquiry's recommendations also included that indigenous people become more involved in the management of national and marine parks; indigenous communities participate in the National Coastal Action Program and are assisted with funding to manage those parts of the coastal zone that they own or control; and, State and Commonwealth natural resource management agencies consult with indigenous people about establishing units to provide advice on them. It was also recommended that indigenous people be represented on all advisory committees for all major fisheries; measures be taken to improve economic development and employment opportunities for indigenous communities in fisheries and mariculture ventures; and, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Fisheries Strategy assess indigenous interests in fisheries. The Inquiry stated that in conjunction with this an investigation is required of the nature of indigenous marine tenure, in the light of the High Court's Mabo decision on native title.
Key cross references


Available from
CAEPR; $20.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), Aboriginal Economic Development Policy (AEDP) government programs, research, economic development, labour force status, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

This monograph provides abstracts of a selection of research published during 1991–92 on indigenous economic issues. The authors focused on research publications that were both publicly available and of use for policy formation, with an emphasis on issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development and labour force status. The impetus for this monograph was to provide an update to the previous annotated bibliography, produced as a consultancy for ATSIC to assess the extent of research published in the period 1985–90 relevant to the AEDP; to provide an up-to-date information base; and to highlight areas that require additional research. This monograph focuses again on these aims but is more widely constituted to include research that extends beyond the boundaries of the AEDP. In particular this study has been informed by a growing awareness of the underlying issues that impinge on the socioeconomic status of indigenous Australians as summarised in some detail by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

The largest proportion of studies focused on government policies and programs, statistics and statistical requirements, and land rights and land management. Other relatively well researched topics included employment issues, demography, and economic status. Most entries were based on Australia-wide research, with 30 focused on specific States. An interesting development has been international comparative research. The bibliography highlighted areas that require further research, such as the inter-relationship between the Australian macroeconomy and the economic and employment status of indigenous Australians; research based on primary data collection in major urban areas; and regional economic
studies using social accounting or input-output methods. There is also an absence of research on employed or relatively well-off indigenous people, and on those residing in suburban situations and in other specific localities such as outstations and town camps. While there is a proliferation of research on the economic impact of government policies and programs, there is a lack of research on the actual mechanics of policy formulation.

Other areas requiring research pointed up by the bibliography are: regional development policies and flows of resources to regions; the participation of indigenous Australians in particular industries, including tourism and mining; participation in subsistence and the impact of mining royalties indigenous communities. Also requiring research are: government programs such as the CDEP scheme and the Business Funding Scheme; issues associated with economic development of land owned by indigenous Australians; and the economic costs associated with long-term unemployment.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1993a, 1993b.


Available from
AIATSIS; $9.95.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Native title, economic development, land acquisition, land management, National Land Fund, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), sustainable development.

While it is expected that the Native Title Act 1993 (NTA) will lead to the transfer of ownership of significant new tracts of land, repossession of land on a significant scale began in the early 1970s with market acquisition through Federal agencies, the Aboriginals Benefit Trust Account in the Northern Territory, and under the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Rights Act; and by transfers of land in the Northern Territory and South Australia under land rights legislation. Total indigenous land holdings according to 1993 AUSLIG figures are just over one million square kilometres. The experience gained in this period should prove valuable in
formulating policy and strategies for the effective management of land that will be acquired in the future.

These extensive land holdings will also have a major impact on the formulation of an overall strategy for land management in the future. The majority of land acquired in the past has had poor economic potential or been in a degraded condition. Much of the land acquired under the NTA will probably have similar characteristics. The implications are that much land will be unsuitable for agricultural production; properties operating as pastoral leases may impose significant financial burdens to meet lease covenants; production of niche crops may be possible; economic activity is likely to be limited and highly specialised; and employment opportunities may have to be created through programs to improve the condition of the land. For land of better quality there may be other implications: appropriate levels of capital funding and technical advice to maximise production and employment; the importance of adaptability to changing conditions for success in the modern economy, including aspects of management standards and best technical practice; a need for separation of commercial activity from the general activities of communities on pastoral properties; the importance of environmentally sustainable development; effective management may require the definition of access rights to and management of community-owned land; a need to strengthen links with relevant mainstream programs; inclusion of indigenous views in the formulation and implementation of relevant programs; and, the need for a database of comprehensive information on all properties owned for planning and policy formulation. Finally the author points out that ATSIC funding on land management has increased rapidly from $1.0 million in 1990–91 to $9.2 million in 1993–94.

Key cross-references


Available from
NARU; $25.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.
Key words
Land management, land use, funding, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), equity, resource management, employment, Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

According to Ross, national policy and legislation assume that landholders have primary responsibility to maintain their lands. Good land management improves the productivity of land. Governments may help landholders to meet this responsibility through advice and subsidies, but will not take over the responsibility. Aboriginal lands, which make up 13 per cent of Australia, do not fit well into this system because few owners have the financial base to contribute even a portion of the funds necessary to carry out land restoration. Also, because there are only a limited number of enterprises on indigenous lands they do not fit the priorities of the Commonwealth's land management funding programs. Two indigenous programs run under the AEDP are accessible to indigenous people but they are designed to produce employment and income, rather than to manage land. Although ATSIC denies explicit responsibility for most aspects of indigenous land management (other than enterprises), it is unwittingly the main funder of indigenous land management under the CDEP scheme.

A funding impasse has arisen over the management of indigenous lands. ATSIC has expected indigenous owners to turn to mainstream programs for support. The mainstream programs, meanwhile, tend to overlook indigenous clientele, assuming ATSIC is responsible for indigenous matters. Many land management needs remain unrecognised or neglected on indigenous land. The question of how the full range of indigenous responsibilities in land management can be funded remains. The author suggests that it would be practicable for ATSIC to undertake to fund all management requirements on indigenous land. In the 1970s, policy and financial responsibilities for indigenous health, education, housing and employment were resolved (more or less) by sharing responsibilities between the Commonwealth and States, and handing the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (now ATSIC) aspects of each issue to handle. Coordination mechanisms were established, and funding responsibilities shared. This paper argues that similar coordination and financial arrangements should be put in place between the Commonwealth and State departments involved in indigenous affairs and land management.

Key cross-references

Available from
Libraries.

*Geographic area*
Australia-wide.

*Key words*
Mabo, native title, land management, sustainable development.

This article argues that the message of the Mabo judgment is much broader than indicated by current focus on the implications of native title for Aboriginal and other property rights. Along with land tenure, Mabo implicitly recognises Aboriginal concepts of land, land use and management, recognising indigenous people as important stakeholders in land use. Mabo implies that their views on land use planning and activities should be sought regardless of whether they are landholders under freehold or native title regimes, customary owners of land where native title has been extinguished or they have lost detailed knowledge of their customary ownership through dispossession and relocation. Environmental managers concerned with all resource sectors should look for creative new options, by seeking and being willing to negotiate solutions which find common ground between Aboriginal interests and those of other interest groups in co-management arrangements. Aboriginal people have much to contribute to land and marine management in the development of sustainable land use regimes particularly for Australia's marginal lands where Ross, Young and Liddle point out that Aboriginal people often form a significant proportion of the resident population. Opportunities for Aboriginal people to discuss environmental management should be improved in a number of ways, especially by improving representation in the environmental planning and management arena. Aboriginal people may benefit from scientific expertise in solving problems of rangeland degradation. The authors envisage land management in the future as a vitally important two-way endeavour.

*Key cross-references*

Available from
Department of Economics, University of Wollongong; $15.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Unemployment, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

Ross comments on two chapters written by F. Castle and N. Verrucci, and J.C. Altman and A.E. Daly, which are included in Responding to Unemployment. His view is that both papers confirm the widely held perception that indigenous people are still marginalised from the mainstream labour market; that there is still very little private sector employment for them and what there is is artificially inflated by the classification of CDEP scheme participants as being in the private sector. CDEP participants are engaged in publicly funded work-for-the-dole jobs, and as such are not legitimately employed in the private sector. The two papers indicate that the existing data need to be better presented, and that there is a long way to go before responses to indigenous unemployment can be regarded as adequate.

The author says that both papers offer insights into why indigenous people are not a part of the mainstream. The reasons are associated with the combined effects of geography, lack of work-place skills, discrimination and differing cultural attitudes to monetary reward and employment. Both papers refer to the critical role of government support for indigenous people. Castle and Verrucci highlight the problems associated with the government provision of education and training programs and Altman and Daly focus on the sheltered nature of the CDEP scheme. According to Ross, the message seems to be that although large amounts of money are directed to the betterment of the indigenous population, the efficacy of this expenditure is questionable. The author feels that neither Castle and Verrucci nor Altman and Daly address the counterfactual situation of how much worse off the indigenous population of Australia would be without this expenditure. According to Ross, they would probably be much worse off, but the real question is whether the money could be better spent.

Key cross-references
Castle, F. and Verrucci, N. 1993; Daly, A.E. et al. 1993; House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs 1993.
ROWSE, T. 1993. 'Rethinking Aboriginal 'resistance': the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP)', Oceania, 63 (3): 268–86.

Available from
Libraries.

Geographic area
Remote Australia with an emphasis on Central Australia.

Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment, self-determination.

Rowse wishes to contribute to an understanding of 'Aboriginal resistance', by a study of the politics of remote indigenous people's 'employment', and to advocate a structural notion of 'resistance', thus moving away from one based on the identification of actors. The article begins by highlighting some themes in recent discussions surrounding AEDP policy and the CDEP scheme. Under the CDEP scheme indigenous communities, which include a large proportion of people eligible to receive unemployment benefits, can choose to be given a lump sum equivalent to the unemployment benefits that would have been received, plus an administrative loading. Through its management body, each community pays its residents to perform activities deemed to be 'work' for the project. The CDEP scheme is popular with indigenous people, but is problematic from the point of view of policy rationality. For example, the scheme relegates participants to a secondary, low-paid labour market; disallows the participation of spouses; and CDEP funds, in some cases, pay for services which participating communities should be entitled to from other government agencies.

The article then looks at features of the welfare and pastoral economy in Central Australia during 1950–75. Rowse claims that assimilation policy resulted in the development of an industrial and economic culture. This culture was a mixture of surviving indigenous traditions and new indigenous desires for commodities and money. It also resulted from the perspectives of non-indigenous political elites, such as the Minister and administration, 'on the ground' Welfare Branch staff and pastoralists through whose commitments and practices assimilation policy was realised within the hinterland economy. Some characteristics of the resulting 'culture of work' were the blurred boundary between workers and non-workers and between work and non-work, and the tension between the upper and lower levels of administration in their perspectives on competence and acculturation.

Rowse aims to show that this industrial culture and its administrative tensions continues. He conjectures that the 'success' of CDEP is that it
recognises and accommodates the many ambiguities and indeterminacies of the historically emergent industrial culture. Under CDEP, power is devolved to local political elites to define 'work', to administer criteria of eligibility for inclusion, and to determine the hours and intensity of labour necessary to earn a certain income. With such discretion being in local hands, the scheme is a problematic for policy and administration workers to evaluate, especially as it is both a welfare and an employment program. Rowse suggests that to call CDEP schemes to account in terms of clearly ranked objectives, as the pending review of the scheme (under the review of the AEDP) must, is to reassert the claims of a centrally-located, rationality-ordering administration.

Key cross-references


Available from
Commonwealth Government Bookshop; $4.95.

Geographic area
South-East Queensland.

Key words
Indigenous statistical surveys, government programs, employment, training, education, indigenous women.

The report includes a discussion of literature on indigenous women's employment in Australia and a profile of the current employment of indigenous women drawn from the 1986 Census. To undertake the study information was collected by interview and group discussion, on the work histories and aspirations of 92 indigenous women in Brisbane and on Stradbroke Island. One purpose of data collection was to investigate the links between paid and unpaid work. Respondents were aged between 16 and 69 years, with a modal age between 35 and 44 years. Half had completed secondary school and half had no post-school qualifications. Fifty-five per cent of the respondents were currently unemployed. Cited reasons include family demands and unavailability of employment.

According to Runciman, over 70 per cent had previously worked in the private sector but now few worked in this sector. Many wished to work with indigenous people and sought out such jobs in indigenous organisations and the public sector. At the time of the study 15 per cent
worked in the public sector and 25 per cent in indigenous organisations. The study showed that many of the employed women had few periods out of the labour force. Those who worked intermittently were more likely to cite inability to find work as a reason for lack of paid work. Very few Stradbroke Island residents had full-time jobs. However, given the limited nature of the labour market on the island, surprisingly, many had rarely been unemployed. Most respondents from both Brisbane and Stradbroke Island had maintained part-time employment for much of their lives.

The respondents were divided into age cohorts: those under 30 years of age; those between 30 and 39; and those aged 40 or more. The 30 to 39-years age group had the highest rate of employment and were more likely to have always worked. The author suggests that this might be because this cohort entered the labour market in the favourable economic and political conditions of the early 1970s, in contrast to the youngest group who entered in the recession of the 1980s and early 1990s.

Work was seen as an important part of women's lives, but responsibilities to children were seen as equally important. Lack of qualifications and skills was seen as the main barrier to gaining employment, followed by employer discrimination and lack of child-care. No evidence was found to support the view that indigenous people attribute control over life to factors external to themselves, in fact the contrary was the case. Respondents indicated that they made use of available resources to construct strategies to balance work and non-work responsibilities.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*
Social Policy Research Centre; $9.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.
Key words
Government policy, access to resources, government programs, government services, Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC).

Social policy towards indigenous Australians was rethought in a fundamental way in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The result is the current involvement in this policy area of many government agencies and programs across the range of functional responsibilities and at both State and Commonwealth Government levels. The involvement of such a multiplicity of agencies and programs has recently been criticised, most notably by the RCIADIC. The alternative suggested by such critics is 'block grants' to Aboriginal community organisations from a single funding source. This forms the basis of the suggestion proposed by the RCIADIC for another fundamental rethinking of social policy towards indigenous Australians. This paper cautions against the uncritical acceptance of this latter reformist idea and proposes that when the Royal Commission's Report is read more broadly, RCIADIC's ambivalence towards its own reformist suggestion becomes clear. Sanders also notes the Commonwealth Government's ambivalence to this idea in its response to the RCIADIC.

The paper goes on to provide a more positive perspective on the large numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other agencies and programs currently involved in social policy towards indigenous Australians under the sub-headings of manoeuvrability, visibility, amount and diversity of Aboriginal circumstances. Sanders takes the view that the growing number of agencies, including mainstream agencies, involved in funding and servicing indigenous Australians over the past 20 years has, in fact, been beneficial. It has increased the potential for indigenous manoeuvrability in relation to government and the larger society, and particularly in relation to any one government agency. The author suggests that what indigenous Australians cannot obtain through one government agency under one guise, may be obtained, under a slightly different guise, from another. Also, indigenous people do presently, and will in the future, obtain more resources to pursue their goals through current arrangements than through any suggested single funding source. Resources flowing from large mainstream organisations such as the Department of Social Security and the Department of Employment, Education and Training are pertinent examples.

Finally, Sanders argues that there is potential for reform in social policy towards indigenous Australians, but that this is primarily at the level of programs, rather than agencies. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission's program structure, in particular, is discussed and lines of potential reform briefly identified.
**Key cross-references**


Available from
CAEPR; S6.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment, unemployment.

This paper updates an earlier article explaining the development of the CDEP scheme over the years since its inception in the mid 1970s. The scheme is a Commonwealth Government program in which unemployed indigenous people forego their entitlements to payments from the Department of Social Security and work part-time for a local indigenous community organisation. The scheme has expanded rapidly in recent years: in 1982–83, 18 communities and 1,300 participants; in 1986–87, 63 communities and 6,000 participants; and in 1992–93, 220 communities and 22,000 participants. The scheme is now the most extensive program in the indigenous policy arena. However, reviews of the scheme have repeatedly identified deep-seated unresolved issues. These include: inadequacy of funding and administrative arrangements; the issue of what constitutes work; under-award wages; its perverse incentive structure when used for enterprise support; and the issue of long-term participation which provides people with a life of 'small money'.

Sanders analyses the relationship between these unresolved issues and the popularity and growth of the scheme under three headings: governmental and bureaucratic politics, Aboriginal community politics, and persistent unemployment. The paper attempts to explain the apparent paradox of the scheme's growth despite its unresolved issues by suggesting that there are different types of policy analysis. Some policy analysis focuses on internal program issues, other on external forces. Sander's suggests that external forces and constituencies rather than internal program issues have been the most important forces in determining the fortunes of the CDEP scheme. It is suggested that an internal focus on
program issues, such as the clarity of goals and administrative logic will always view a program such as the CDEP scheme unfavourably. This is because of the scheme's mixture of welfare and workforce goals, multiple internal logics and the fact that unresolved issues abound. However, when the scheme is viewed from the perspective of the outside forces affecting it, it can be seen that it has always enjoyed support amongst important constituencies. Sander's identifies and describes four of these: a bureaucratic constituency, an Aboriginal constituency, an industrial relations constituency and a general public constituency.

Key cross-references


Available from
University Co-operative Bookshop; $34.95.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Housing – government policy, government programs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, economic status.

This paper is one chapter in a book which otherwise focuses on the housing of the total Australian population. It begins by noting the atypical position of Aboriginal Australians in relation to the provision of housing in comparison with other Australians. The 1986 Census showed that indigenous people numbered 227,000, or just 1.5 per cent of the total population; were disproportionately young, poor and unemployed; and resided disproportionately in smaller urban and rural locations, and in northern, rather than southern Australia. Of the 50,000 Aboriginal households identified in the 1986 Census only 27 per cent owned or were buying their dwelling, while 39 per cent were renting from public housing or government authorities and 31 per cent occupied private or community rental dwellings; figures very different from those given elsewhere in the book relating to the total Australian population.

Much of the chapter is an attempt to elucidate some of the factors behind the stark tenure differences between the Aboriginal population and the total Australian population both historically and in recent times. A brief history of Aboriginal housing policy and programs is provided, as well as a
discussion of the concepts of needs and appropriateness as applied to this policy area. The chapter also explores the way that Aboriginal housing programs tend to create a politics of their own in the form of competing claims for funds and through debates of the relative merits of different programs. Tables give comparisons between indigenous income levels and that of the total population, housing tenure of indigenous households and government expenditure on indigenous housing programs.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Torres Strait.

Key words
Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), regional government, Commonwealth/State/local government relations.

The TSRA was established in July 1994 under the Commonwealth's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC); the TSRA, however, is regarded by many as a transitional arrangement with momentum building up for further regional autonomy. An overview of settlement history and population characteristics in the Strait is followed by an outline of the development of structures for local and regional political representation. The possibility of reshaping governance in Torres Strait is the result of several factors relating to these circumstances, especially Islander pressure since the 1987–88 calls for Torres Strait independence, and the suggestion that since the Goss Government is not responsible for existing Community Services legislation, it is unlikely to feel obliged to strongly defend those structures or legislation.

Three key issues may be central to future negotiations. Firstly, the relationship between the TSRA or any future regional government and other government authorities operating in Torres Strait. Secondly, the precise constituency to which regional government is to be directed, and whether it includes Torres Strait Islanders living elsewhere in Australia, Aboriginal people living in Torres Strait, and, most significantly, non-Islanders/non-Aborigines living in the Strait. Thirdly, in relation to its
internal confederal representative structure, there is strong commitment to existing Island Councils and to the Torres Shire making it likely that these entities will continue to exist in any future regional government. Torres Strait regional government may move to a more general residential constituency, rather than one restricted to Islanders and Aborigines. If this occurs, it is to be expected that future negotiations would move outside the ATSIC structure and also outside current debates about recognition of the inherent rights of indigenous self-government. A final note is made about developments in Torres Strait and interpretations of Australian federalism.

Key cross-references


Available from Libraries.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), self-determination, self-management.

Since the early 1970s Commonwealth Governments have been pursuing policies of self-determination/self-management in relation to Aborigines. At the core of these policies has been the idea that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be involved in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. At the regional and local levels this has led to the encouragement and funding of incorporated indigenous organisations, both to deliver specific services and to manage general indigenous community affairs. At the national level, these policies led to two early experiments in the creation of government-sponsored indigenous representative structures, the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee (1973–77) and the National Aboriginal Conference (1977–85). In 1987, the Hawke Government announced its intention to establish ATSIC, to both further develop national indigenous representative structures and administer specific programs.
During the debates over ATSIC's formation, the issue of public accountability in the existing administration of Aboriginal affairs came to public prominence. The result was some extensive reworking of the ATSIC proposal, which in 1989 re-emerged with a strengthened emphasis on public accountability. This discussion paper traces the events and arguments surrounding ATSIC's formation and then goes on to examine ATSIC in practice. It asks whether ATSIC is succeeding in reconciling the two imperatives of Aboriginal self-determination/self-management and public accountability. The answer depends to a large extent on how one defines these aims.

In international law, self-determination is often associated with the right of people to determine their political status, possibly as a separate nation State. However, this is hardly reconcilable with notions of public accountability to a larger nation State. To reconcile the two aims, one must take a pragmatic view of self-determination as some form of indigenous participation in important decision-making processes within the existing nation-state. Moneys devoted to indigenous people's assistance must be seen as publicly accountable, rather than some open-ended compensation for past injustices. Sanders' research suggests that middle managers within ATSIC do not see the two principles of self-determination/self-management and public accountability as mutually exclusive, and feel that a reasonable balance is being struck within ATSIC. Also, ATSIC Commissioners presently accept the current concern for public accountability. Regional council Chairpersons hold a wide range of views, some seeing ATSIC as a white dictatorship reproducing old regimes, others feeling that indigenous people are now making their own decisions. Sanders concludes that the longer-term success of ATSIC's delicate balancing act is not yet assured, but a reasonable start has been made.

Key cross-references


Available from
University Co-operative Bookshop; $24.94.

Geographic area
Australia-wide with emphasis on the Northern Territory.
Key words
Land rights, mining, property rights, environmental interests, national parks.

Smith says that many major disputes over land use have involved either mining or forestry, since both are activities that often come into conflict with environmental interests. The mining industry points to the large area of land that is difficult to access or is closed to new exploration and mining activity. In 1992, the Mining Industry Council indicated that 16.6 per cent of the continent was either Aboriginal land or land under claim, and 7.7 per cent was contained in national parks or nature reserves. In general, exploration and mining activity are prohibited in national parks and reserves. While it is appropriate for some areas of special high conservation value to be set aside in this way, it does not seem sensible to adopt all or nothing approaches to the use of very large tracts of land, such as Kakadu National Park. Indeed the Resource Assessment Commission's inquiry on mining on Coronation Hill concluded that there was no case for prohibiting the development of the mine on environmental grounds. The Conservation Zone area in question was not at that time formally part of the Park but, presumably, the conclusion of the Resource Assessment Commission inquiry could have applied to other, similar areas within the Park boundary.

The issue, according to Smith, is arriving at the right trade-offs on a case by case basis. Rather than define caste-iron boundaries between areas where exploration and mining are permitted and those where they are prohibited, it seems more sensible to have gradations of sensitivity. The Coronation Hill example illustrates the difficulty and unreliability of bureaucratic and political approvals process in resolving these sorts of land-use conflicts, and the ultimate resolution of Coronation Hill issue left much to be desired. The Commonwealth's decision to include this area in Kakadu National Park, and thereby preclude mining was based on its desire to meet the wishes of the prospective land-owners, the Jawoyn Aboriginal people. The incentives facing the Jawoyn in the Coronation Hill case was an extreme version of that which characterises Aboriginal land holdings in general. In the Northern Territory, indigenous landowners have the right to veto mining but do not have a strong incentive to allow mining to take place. They are granted inalienable land titles so that they cannot sell mineral-bearing land. Through the land councils, they are able to gain access to royalty revenue from mining but only a small share accrues to the owners of the land. Specific property rights is thus also a critical area. In the Coronation Hill case, the Jawoyn people did not have formal title to the land and would not necessarily have gained any compensation from mining activity.

Key cross-references

Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), government policy, government administration, government funding, self-determination.

ATSIC's financial role is guided by the objectives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989. ATSIC is authorised to establish the terms and conditions under which it makes funds available and to develop policy proposals to meet the needs of indigenous people. ATSIC's financing is influenced by the legacy of its predecessors, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Aboriginal Development Commission, which were criticised as being driven by an ad hoc crisis mentality. While there is evidence that this is changing, the author sees a need within ATSIC for coherent, transparent funding processes that would result in a fair distribution of economic resources. This paper is the first of two focusing on resource allocation policy and practice in ATSIC. The current approach to the distribution of funds is examined here while CAEPR Discussion Paper No. 42 examines the potential implications of fiscal equalisation for ATSIC's future funding policy and practice.

ATSIC is unique in government administration. Its financial powers and structure extend across a hierarchy of elected representatives on the one hand, and an equally hierarchical administrative arm on the other. Sixty regional councils each with 10–20 councillors, and grouped into 17 zones, act as regional representatives for three years. Smith reviews ATSIC's current financial structure and powers and this forms the context for a wider consideration of the financial relationships evolving between the organisation's structural elements. The budgetary procedures and related program framework are examined. The role of regional councils and regional planning are discussed as well as the implications of the financial tensions emerging between councils. The emerging relationship between ATSIC's Board of Commissioners, the administrative arm and regional councils is posed as crucial, as is that between the newly-formed State Advisory Committees and councils.

The paper considers the implications for ATSIC's current funding role of its representative regional structure, its program structure and the
emerging pressures towards decentralisation, arguing that ATSIC is in need of an integrated, holistic funding policy and procedures which link regional planning and service needs to national decisions about resource distribution.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), government policy, government administration, government funding, self-determination.

ATSIC currently lacks integrated policy guidelines for its distribution of funds at regional, state and national levels. CAEPR Discussion Paper No. 41 examined ATSIC's existing financial powers and budgetary processes and argued that its financial objectives and the developing role of regional councils are hindered by the lack of funding policy and by an overly complex, functionally-based program structure. It was suggested that ATSIC needed a funding model based on distributive equity, where program expenditure would be allocated on the basis of relative need. This discussion paper develops the analysis of ATSIC's current funding role, suggesting that future funding policy and practice should be focused at the regional council level and equitably account for relative levels of indigenous socioeconomic disadvantage, as well as between indigenous peoples and the wider Australian population.

ATSIC is currently reassessing its methods for distributing financial resources to indigenous organisations and communities and considering the relevance of horizontal fiscal equalisation. The principle methods of fiscal equalisation used by the Commonwealth Grants Commission are examined and critically investigated for their suitability as a future basis for ATSIC's allocation of funds to regional councils. While the paper is exploratory, it suggests that the principle of equalisation provides a potentially valuable distributive framework for ATSIC. Equalisation's broad objectives would
support flexibility in the pursuit of different budgetary and program aims at the regional level, accommodate changing socioeconomic factors affecting regional populations, and recognise the crucial impact of regional economic and social diversity on financial assistance requirements. These characteristics make it especially suited to the cultural and economic heterogeneity of the indigenous population, to the evolving relationship between ATSIC's board, its regional structure and central administration, and to ATSIC's objective of furthering indigenous economic, social and cultural development in all its diversity. Although equalisation would require substantial modification, it offers a potentially valuable option to ATSIC. It may result in a more effective distribution of resources to areas of greatest need, and may assist in the resolution of some of the more enduring difficulties associated with funding and performance in indigenous public policy. A number of other issues associated with the use of equalisation are considered in the conclusion of the paper including data management; implications for ATSIC's program structure; for government funding more broadly; and for ATSIC's potential coordinating role at the intergovernmental and interagency level.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, labour force status, employment, government policy, government programs.

Smith considers the cross-cultural validity of standard social indicators of the labour force status of Australia's indigenous population. Official indicators developed from 1991 Census data are examined in terms of their methodological and conceptual bases, and in light of information from ethnographic field studies. It is argued that while the indicators are useful
in highlighting broad socioeconomic disadvantage, a range of cultural factors influence data collection and statistical outcomes, thus the resulting indicators have shortcomings. Official indicators are found to underestimate the extent of indigenous long-term unemployment, display definitional ambiguity, obscure characteristics of indigenous involvement in the mainstream labour market, and ignore culturally-grounded economic decisions. Despite their shortcomings, there is a growing reliance by government and indigenous groups on these indicators for they are the only available markers of the relative economic disadvantage of indigenous people. This paper presents options for expanding the validity of these indicators. According to the author the concept of the 'currently active population' informing the notion of labour force used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is inappropriate for assessing the labour market position of many indigenous people. The concept refers to those above a certain age who supply labour during a specified period (standardly 'last week'). Smith says the alternative concept, the 'usually active population', is more applicable to the labour force where a high proportion of employment is affected by cultural factors. This refers to people above a certain age who were employed or unemployed during most of a longer reference period, such as the preceding 12 months. Also, indigenous economic activity and status could be more accurately depicted by using a dual reference period: the standard four week period and a longer 12 month period.

Also, ABS's special surveys such as the monthly Labour Force Survey and the Survey of Employment and Earnings should be upgraded to include an indigenous identifier and sampling methods expanded to cover cultural and geographic variations within Aboriginal society. Definitions need to be expanded to include Aboriginal perspectives on economy, work and unemployment. Longitudinal and long-term data sets based on a series of expanded measures are needed to arrive at a 'life-cycle' model of Aboriginal labour force status. According to the author this would more accurately reflect indigenous 'recycling' through and out of the labour force, and the cultural bases of work preferences. Thus, according to Smith, the collection of social indicators on indigenous Australians should be based on a more dynamic model of Aboriginal interaction with the mainstream economy. The static, cross-sectional view of Aboriginal economic activity portrayed by official labour force indicators obscures underlying dynamics and is thus inadequate for use in government policy and program formulation.

Key cross-references

Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Port Lincoln, South Australia.

Key words
Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment, enterprises, training, self-determination.

There are few case studies of the operation of the CDEP scheme in remote communities, and no accounts of urban schemes though the scheme has been in operation since 1977 and has been the subject to government reviews. Under the CDEP scheme, members of an indigenous community collectively forego their individual Job Search and Newstart allowance in exchange for wages paid for work initiated by the community in which they reside. This paper describes the organisation of the urban Kuju CDEP scheme in Port Lincoln, held up by the RCIADIC and by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs as an example of 'self-determination in practice'. The scheme is generating employment and training opportunities within the community and is making a contribution to individual and family wellbeing. The case study describes the organisational structure and practices developed by the Kuju CDEP scheme, considers the socioeconomic and cultural background within which it is operating, and presents an examination of employment and other outcomes. Smith concludes with an assessment of national program and policy objectives informed by local outcomes and perspectives. The paper is based on two weeks field research.

The Kuju CDEP scheme has created another employment sector in the Port Lincoln economy. Employment conditions, policies, and wage rates within Kuju have been determined by response to local conditions. Kuju provides employment by running contracts and programs which are becoming economically viable, including one for the State Housing Commission. It has also provided a transition to fulltime employment, with 14 people moving off CDEP and into fulltime employment between 1990–91. Employment is mostly within the indigenous community services sector; there are few employment opportunities in the private sector. The author sees the scheme's employment outcomes as an achievement at a time when there are increasing levels of unemployment amongst the local...
non-indigenous population. The Community Employment Service has noted the improvement in the Kuju CDEP participants' work skills over five years, comparing these with indigenous people who are registered as unemployed.

Smith questions the validity of the characterisation of CDEP employment as 'make work', not 'real employment', at least in the context of the Kuju CDEP scheme and Port Lincoln. Before Kuju there were declining numbers of jobs; casual work had virtually disappeared. In these circumstances small employment gains and increased work skills are achievements in a town where the pre-CDEP unemployment rate was 47 per cent and post-CDEP, 27 per cent (as measured by intercensal statistics).

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*
Out of print; available in libraries.

*Geographic area*
Australia-wide.

*Key words*
Coastal zone management, land rights, sea rights, economic development, economic self-sufficiency.

This report summarises the concerns and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with respect to Australia's coastal zone management as expressed during the Coastal Zone Inquiry via meetings, hearings and submissions. Consultations took place in all States and Territories during 1992 and 1993. The report discusses indigenous people's interests in relation to the main themes of the Inquiry: tourism, mariculture, building and associated development. Due to concerns expressed by indigenous people about aspects of commercial fishing, and mining, these coastal industries are also addressed.

Indigenous subsistence fishing, including collection of shellfish, contributes around 35 per cent of energy and 60 per cent of protein to the diet of a coastal community in the Northern Territory. The seafood consumption of Torres Strait Islanders is among the highest in the world; on Mabuig Island it is 450 grams per person per day. At the New South
Wales coastal Wallaga Lake community 90 per cent of adults collect seafood as part of the diet. The concern of indigenous people is that their relationship to coastal land, sea and resources based on cultural affiliation, economic dependence and traditional ownership, is not being adequately recognised. Without such recognition, indigenous people have been marginalised from decision-making processes that control the land, the sea and their resources. Smyth outlines conflicts that have arisen in various coastal regions, and presents the views of indigenous people on how these can be resolved. The report concludes that the mechanisms for indigenous involvement in coastal zone management should be improved throughout the zone; they are particularly inadequate in southern Australia, where indigenous sea rights are less recognised in legislation and where indigenous interests in the coastal zone are less well understood by environmental and resource managers. Recommendations made by indigenous people include the need for legislation to recognise customary ownership of land, sea and resources, as well as strategies to improve co-management arrangements. Fisheries are in particular need of reform to take indigenous interests into account. The report discusses examples of where attempts are being made to address indigenous interests, such as the management of Queensland’s fisheries and marine parks. It notes, however, that many of the recommendations of past inquiries which are of direct relevance to indigenous people have not been implemented by governments. In view of this inaction, indigenous groups and individuals have urged the RAC to recommend that the Commonwealth should enact legislation which will establish national principles for the recognition of indigenous rights and interests in coastal zone management.

The report also highlights requests from indigenous communities and organisations for greater access to, control of, and benefit from the utilisation of coastal resources. The precise nature of the implications of the Mabo High Court decision remain unclear, according to Smyth, but it is certain that the recognition of the existence of native title in common law has changed the ways in which indigenous people, as legitimate stakeholders and titleholders of land and resources, can seek to interact with resource and environmental managers.

Key cross-references

*Available from*
Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; free publication.

*Geographic area*
Australia-wide.

*Key words*
Land rights, sea rights, Mabo, government legislation, management of resources, fishing.

This paper aims to show the ways in which land and sea continue to be of significance to contemporary indigenous societies. The author points out that while retaining cultural associations with land and sea, indigenous people are also involved in contemporary land and marine management.

Some national parks in the Northern Territory are owned and jointly managed by indigenous communities. Elsewhere, indigenous involvement is growing, for example, through membership of consultative committees, and some other States are also moving towards indigenous ownership and joint management programs. In Queensland, indigenous peoples’ involvement in marine park management has been increasing. The recently completed plan for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park envisages greater indigenous control over areas of land, sea and resources. Negotiations for joint management of a portion of the Cairns State Marine Park are underway. In other States less attention has been paid to indigenous peoples’ participation in marine park management.

In the Torres Strait, Islanders are members of fisheries consultative committees and have preferential access to future commercial fishing licenses. On western Cape York Peninsula, the Kowanyama community has negotiated a reduction in commercial fishing. Several indigenous organisations are developing proposals to regain greater control over the management of their marine environments, such as the Island Coordinating Council in Torres Strait. In eastern Arnhem Land, Yolngu people are developing a plan for the management of their coastal waters, which includes issues like commercial fishing and shipping. Elsewhere, indigenous communities are generally not involved in fisheries management. At several locations in northern Australia, such as Kowanyama, Mona Mona on the Atherton Tableland and Nhulunbuy in eastern Arnhem Land, communities have established small agencies to develop programs and policies for environmental management of their
They aim to re-establish traditional methods in land management, while also incorporating modern resource management techniques.

Indigenous peoples' rights in legislation to hunt, gather and fish vary. Across northern Australia, indigenous peoples are exempt from most fishing regulations, enabling them to pursue traditional and commercial fishing. In most of southern Australia, however, there is no special recognition of indigenous fishing, which has resulted in little involvement of indigenous people in commercial fishing, limiting their ability to obtain traditional seafoods. Recognition of indigenous peoples' rights to hunt on land varies from State to State.

The author spells out the varying provisions for land rights between States. In relation to Mabo, the author sees an opportunity for some indigenous groups to receive formal recognition of their customary claim to land. In particular, this may only be possible over some vacant Crown Land, national parks and perhaps only in remote areas of Australia where indigenous people have maintained their association with land. However, some legal opinion suggests that a more comprehensive recognition of customary marine estates may eventuate.

**Key cross-references**

**STRAPP, T. 1994. 'Mt Todd land use - a win-win for all', The Mining Review, 18 (1): 12–16.**

**Available from**
Libraries.

**Geographic area**
Mount Todd, Northern Territory.

**Key words**
Mining, native title, native title, self-determination, employment, economic development.

The author is Executive Chairman of the mining company Zapopan NL. The article, which describes a land-use agreement with the Jawoyn people, begins by outlining the history of indigenous land rights claims in and around the Mount Todd area. In 1978 the Jawoyn people lodged a land claim under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (ALRA) to unalienated Crown land. However, the Land Commissioner's report, presented in 1987, did not recommend all of the land subject to claim for grant: the Mount Todd mining project area was excluded from the area recommended for claim. Over the years the Jawoyn lodged repeat land
claims which included the Mount Todd area, which were not heard. Their case was strengthened in 1993 by the Mabo High Court decision on native title and the passing of the Native Title Act 1993. However, the company was advised that the existence of land claims under the ALRA would not prejudice the granting of mineral leases in the area and that a native title claim over Mount Todd would probably fail when viewed against the evidence.

However, Zapopan NL chose not to take a confrontationist approach in relation to the problem and sought a resolution by negotiation with the Jawoyn people through the Jawoyn Association. The Northern Territory and Federal Governments joined in this negotiation process. The Jawoyn were clear in their support for the project but saw the negotiation process as their only opportunity to secure a responsible outcome for their people. A point was reached in the negotiations in which the Jawoyn’s concerns over land, the environment, jobs (five at the mine inception, with training), and economic development had been dealt with and the company was satisfied with their commercial arrangements with the Jawoyn. In order to complete the agreement, the rights of the Jawoyn in relation to Native Title Act 1993, had to be relinquished. Strapp describes how the negotiators had to arrange an agreement, for which there was no precedent, to achieve this. The author sees the result of the negotiations as acceptable to governments, the company and the Jawoyn people, giving the Jawoyn the opportunity to participate in and to develop the economic independence that they desire.

Key cross-references


Available from
Tasman Institute; $10.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Mabo, native title, property rights, economic development, mineral resources - rights.

An effective market economy is based on the efficient use and accumulation of property. This will occur only if property rights are clearly defined, defendable, tradeable and offer an exclusive stream of benefits to
the owners. Defining the scope of property rights does not, however, require designating ownership over undiscovered resources; indeed vesting ownership of minerals in the surface owner introduces inefficiencies, the most obvious of which are transaction costs, while conferring little incentive to search out, improve or guard the resource. The Mabo decision failed to define the scope of native title, creating great uncertainty regarding the extent to which certain land titles are affected. It also restricted the 'tradability' of native title thereby diminishing much of the potential wealth of the country.

Within the spectrum of property rights and the market system, the Northern Territory experience since the Aboriginal Land Rights Act of 1976 is examined, and implications of the Mabo decision are discussed. Observations focus on barriers to exploration and mining resulting from the passage of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act. The existence of such barriers is demonstrated by the dramatic fall in the number of exploration licenses issued on Aboriginal land compared to the number issued on non-Aboriginal land. This has occurred through the exercise of a veto right over both exploration and mining pre-1987, and a veto over exploration licenses since 1987; the veto has greatly increased time and negotiation costs and has resulted in additional payments to Aborigines. A flow chart of mining exploration licensing procedures in the Northern Territory for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal land demonstrates uncertainty and potential for indefinite delays involved in reaching the stage where exploration can commence on Aboriginal land. In conclusion it is argued that where unwieldy negotiation and veto processes overlay a system of tradable property rights the impact on costs is stifling; in contrast the mining industry requires positive incentives, not restrictions of the type imposed by Mabo.

Key cross-references

TAYLOR, J. 1993a. Urban Housing Need Among Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders: Options for Estimation in Statistically Rare Populations. Ian Buchan Fell Research Centre, University of Sydney, Sydney, 32pp. (This is an expanded version of 'Survey or census? Estimation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander need in large urban areas', CAEPR Discussion Paper No. 28, 1992.)

Available from
Ian Buchan Fell Research Centre; $10.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.
Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, housing - urban housing need, research.

The paper is drawn from a consultancy report outlining the technical options for assessing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing need in urban centres. This followed from discussions relating to collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics at the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research workshop, A National Survey of Aboriginal and Islander Populations: Problems and Prospects, convened in April 1992.

One issue raised in the proceedings was that the availability of accurate data on the social and economic characteristics of indigenous Australians has fallen behind the growth in demand for such statistics. Among the reasons advanced to explain this hiatus was a growing Aboriginal and Islander presence in urban areas with the associated difficulty of locating possible survey participants, leading to bureaucratic statistical inertia.

The paper examines some of the difficulties faced by social scientists in attempting to derive a representative sample for survey purposes from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations resident in large urban areas and explores the use of alternative census-based data options. While the discussion relates specifically to the estimation of housing need, the basic issues and methodologies outlined provide essential background for any attempt at information gathering from statistically rare populations.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1993e; Australian Housing Research Council 1994; Gray, A. 1993; Jones, R. 1994; Sanders, W. 1993c.


Available from
CAEPR; $15.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment, income, equality.
The monograph was produced for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and the Department of Employment, Education and Training as a contribution to the mid-term review of the AEDP. The AEDP has sought to increase the relative employment growth among indigenous Australians as well as to upgrade their occupational status in the hope of raising income levels. Information was sought on the labour market impact of the AEDP. To fulfil this requirement, a detailed analysis of 1986 and 1991 Census data was conducted to ascertain the degree to which the AEDP objectives of employment, and income equality have been achieved.

The analysis compares changes in the economic status of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders separately with that of other Australians, using a range of social indicators at the national level disaggregated by section-of-State. These indicators include labour force status, occupational status, industry, industry sector by employment, hours worked, level of qualifications, income status and welfare dependence. This analysis of change in the socioeconomic status of indigenous people in Australia provides the first comprehensive indication of the impacts of the AEDP since it was implemented after 1986.

The study showed that the results of the AEDP, in terms of policy objectives, appear to be mixed. AEDP targets in terms of employment growth have been achieved leading to a closing of the gap in indicators with the rest of the population. The employment rate for Aboriginal people rose from 33.1 per cent to 37.3 per cent, for Torres Strait Islanders from 46.2 to 49.9, and for the total population from 64.1 to 64.7 between 1986 and 1991. However, the achievement is revealed to be predominantly a rural phenomenon involving mostly part-time work with increasing emphasis on labouring and para-professional jobs in community services. At the same time the labour force status of indigenous males in urban areas has worsened and there is no evidence of a closing of the gap in income differentials. The lack of improvement in the income status of indigenous Australians is given added weight when account is taken of growing income inequalities for the population as a whole.

From a labour market perspective, one difficulty continues to be the substantial proportion of indigenous adults of working age who are not in the labour force. This accounts, in large part, for the persistence of relatively high levels of welfare dependence. Given that much new employment growth has involved a shift into employment of individuals formally outside the labour force, it could be argued that levels of welfare dependence are actually higher than revealed by the census. This is because income derived from employment in a CDEP scheme merely represents the transfer of social security entitlements under a different guise. Under the CDEP scheme community members swap their unemployment benefit entitlements for work in the community and wages which are approximately equivalent to unemployment entitlements.

The most significant policy implication to emerge from this analysis is the indication that recent net employment growth among indigenous
Australians has been due in large part to expansion of the CDEP scheme. Contrasting with the expansion of CDEP scheme employment is the decline in urban-based public and private sector jobs. The corollary of program-driven job growth has been the increased concentration of indigenous employment into narrower segment of the labour market. Involvement in public administration and community service industries is now more concentrated than before, as is employment in the local government sector. Indigenous people appear to remain firmly behind in an economy which is increasingly divided into the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $15.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, employment, income, equality, regional disadvantage.

The monograph was produced for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and the Department of Employment, Education and Training as a contribution to the mid-term review of the AEDP. The AEDP has sought to increase relative employment growth among indigenous Australians as well as upgrade their occupational status. Information was sought on the labour market impact of AEDP. To fulfil this, a detailed analysis of 1986 and 1991 Census data was conducted to ascertain the degree to which the AEDP objectives of employment, and income equality have been achieved. The analysis compares changes in the economic status of indigenous and non-indigenous Australians using a range of social indicators at the State level disaggregated by section-of-State. These indicators include labour force status, occupational status, industry,
industry sector by employment, hours worked, level of qualifications, income status and welfare dependence.

At a time when issues of regional disadvantage are again emerging in Australian public policy, the AEDP appears to be having a regional impact on indigenous economic status by emphasising the existing economic disparities between regions which have large rural-based, as opposed to urban-based, indigenous populations. In this regard, the 1986 regional pattern, whereby the south-eastern states of Victoria, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory had the highest economic status and the Northern Territory and Western Australia had the lowest, persists. A policy question that this raises is whether AEDP efforts to raise economic status in situ imply that these regional discrepancies in economic status will inevitably be sustained.

Policy realism might dictate the goals of statistical equality in either employment or income terms applied in a pan-indigenous manner may need to be somewhat diluted. Given the growing emphasis on regionalism in Australian public policy generally, as well as in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs under the aegis of the ATSIC regional council structure, it may be more appropriate to devolve goal-setting to the regions. In many situations, the goal of statistical equality between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians may remain vitally important. In other situations, however, culturally-appropriate employment together with options to generate income beyond social security entitlements may be of greater appeal. Such devolution might relieve centralised policy makers from setting what appear to be unattainable statistical goals at the global level and it might also relieve some regions of the anxiety associated with not being able to meet such targets. A re-orientation of policy along these lines would also serve to enhance the social justice notion of equity and elevate it above more administrative notions of statistical equality which the regional diversity of the indigenous Australian population clearly undermines.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*

CAEPR; $6.
The formation and evaluation of Aboriginal economic policy is heavily dependent upon data from the five-yearly census of population to establish the relative economic standing of Aboriginal people. This paper provides the first opportunity to assess some of the socioeconomic impacts of policies, such as the AEDP, that were applied during the late 1980s and early 1990s. This is done by using 1991 Census data to describe the current socioeconomic status of the Northern Territory's indigenous population and analysing the intercensal change in critical indicators since 1986. Comparison with the non-indigenous population is drawn across a range of labour market and other economic indicators and the data are also disaggregated according to geographic location and gender.

The successful implementation of policy which seeks to increase the relative rate of employment growth as well as to upgrade occupational status in the hope of raising indigenous incomes was destined to be difficult in the context of a national economic recession and rising unemployment. The results of this study point to mixed policy success. While improvements in Aboriginal labour force status are noted. For example, in 1986 the indigenous unemployment rate was 35 per cent and this had declined to 26 per cent by 1991. The improvement in the labour force status of indigenous people was entirely due, however, to their increased participation in the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme and was predominantly a rural phenomenon. At the same time, labour force status in urban areas has worsened; for example, the indigenous male unemployment rate increase by almost 4 per cent in urban areas. Also during this time indigenous employment became increasingly concentrated into narrower segments of the labour market. The overall goal of raising Aboriginal income status remains elusive due largely to a real relative decline in male incomes.

Key cross-references


Available from Libraries.
Geographic area
Remote localities in Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland with a focus on the Northern Territory.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, government policy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population counts.

Over the past two decades, the number of indigenous people resident in remote locations has increased significantly as part of a decentralisation trend in indigenous rural population distribution. This ‘return to country’ is an aspect of a political, social and economic change. Previous analyses reveal that indigenous people resident in the remotest locations have lower socioeconomic status than their counterparts elsewhere but they did not display distinct demographic characteristics. Taylor states that given the role played by census data in informing economic and social policies directed at the indigenous population in remote areas, some assessment of remote area data is required as these are derived from enumeration procedures which differ fundamentally from the standard approach employed in the census.

This paper discusses the remote area census enumeration strategy employed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), particularly that employed in the Northern Territory. In areas where traditional culture predominates, the ABS has, over the past decade, collected census data by interview, using mainly indigenous enumerators, rather than the standard method of self-enumeration. Taylor suggests that although the census enumeration procedures ensure comprehensive collection of data they may have compromised accuracy, since the onus is on interviewers to retrieve information for all persons listed on household forms, with the assistance of key informants and administrative records if necessary. Given the ABS’s census geography, population totals for individual small outstations are impossible to establish. In an attempt to derive an approximation of the population at outstations, a geographic module was constructed by the National Aboriginal Statistics Unit of the ABS from the 1991 Census Aboriginal subfile comprising those census districts where more than 50 per cent of the population resided in localities of less than 100 persons. Using this module, a total of 7,121 indigenous people were enumerated at outstations in 1991, representing a 2.4 per cent increase during the intercensal period 1986–91.

Taylor goes on to highlight some possible implications for the interpretation of census counts and census characteristics. For example, the question of whether census counts are appropriate to the task of describing social and economic conditions in these remote areas, and the way the highly mobile nature of the population causes definitional problems regarding the term ‘households’.
Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Queensland.

Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), economic status, equity, equality, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, labour markets, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

While there is no doubt that Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders share relatively low economic status when compared to most Australians, there are, at the same time, significant differences between them in terms of culture, geographic distribution and the manner of their incorporation into wider institutional structures. This is of particular importance in Queensland which is the State that the majority of Torres Strait Islanders both originate from and reside in. Furthermore, they constitute more than 20 per cent of the State's indigenous population. One of the features of this paper is to examine the gap in economic status between Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations as well as to compare their changing population distribution.

This analysis also provides the first comparative basis for considering the State-wide impacts of the AEDP since it was implemented in 1987. The results, in terms of stated policy objectives, appear to be mixed. On the one hand, employment and unemployment rates among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people showed distinct signs of improvement leading to a closing of the gap in these indicators (albeit slowly) with the rest of the population. On the other hand, when the data were disaggregated by section-of-State and the nature of employment growth was investigated, this achievement was revealed to have been a predominantly rural phenomenon and related to the expansion of the CDEP scheme during the intercensal period.

In contrast with the growth of rural employment, urban-based public and private sector jobs showed a much slower rate of increase. While this was counter to expectations, given the strength of program efforts to
encourage urban employment, it appears that the impact of AEDP public
and private sector programs, in the context of a depressed mainstream
labour market, was to ameliorate what might otherwise have been a far
worse outcome. Despite some signs that focused labour market programs
left a mark, indigenous people in Queensland clearly remain marginalised
in terms of acquiring new jobs in urban labour markets.

Given some improvement in the relative labour force status of
indigenous people in Queensland there would appear to be statistical
grounds for expecting that the income gap between them and the rest of the
population may have narrowed. Overall, however, the census indicates
little change with the Aboriginal mean income as a ratio of non-indigenous
mean income falling slightly from 0.65 in 1986 to 0.64 in 1991 and the
Torres Strait Islander ratio rising fractionally from 0.67 to 0.68. Some
variability in income status was evident by section-of-State. For example,
the ratio of mean incomes for Aboriginal people in rural areas compared to
those in major urban areas (Brisbane, Townsville and Gold Coast) fell from
0.88 in 1986 to 0.79 in 1991. The opposite trend emerged for Torres Strait
Islanders, as well as for other Australians. Among Torres Strait Islanders,
for example, the rural/major urban ratio of mean incomes rose from 0.80 to
0.95. This result for Torres Strait Islanders is interesting as a large
proportion of those in rural areas are located in the Torres Strait and
participate in the CDEP scheme with associated low incomes. Thus, the
convergence of rural and urban incomes was probably an indication of
worsening labour force status of Torres Strait Islanders in the larger cities.
Overall, Torres Strait Islanders maintained an intermediate position in
terms of employment and income status between that of Aboriginal people
and the rest of the population. This clearly underlines the importance of
assessing policy impacts on the economic status of indigenous people in
Queensland at varying levels of aggregation and for different sub-groups in
the population.

Key cross-references
Altman, J.C. and Liu Jin 1994; Arthur, W.S. 1994; Arthur, W.S. and

TAYLOR, J. 1994b. 'The relative economic status of indigenous people
in the Australian Capital Territory, 1986–91', CAEPR Discussion Paper
No. 61, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), The
Australian National University, Canberra, 26pp.

Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Australian Capital Territory.
Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), economic status, equity, equality, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, labour markets.

This analysis of change in the relative economic status of indigenous people in the Australian Capital Territory during the intercensal period 1986 to 1991 provides the first comprehensive indication of the local impacts of the AEDP since its launch in 1987. The results, in terms of stated policy objectives, are negative and somewhat ironic. Evidence from the 1986 Census indicated that indigenous people resident in the Australian Capital Territory had substantially higher economic status than those living elsewhere in Australia. Furthermore, the gap in economic status relative to that of other residents of the Australian Capital Territory was much less evident than in other States and Territories. This was despite the higher than average economic status of the region's non-indigenous residents. Clearly, of all the jurisdictions in Australia, the Australian Capital Territory was the one where AEDP goals of statistical equality in labour force and income status were very close to achievement at the time the policy was launched. While this was still the case in 1991, and while indigenous people in the Australian Capital Territory retained their pre-eminent economic status compared to indigenous people elsewhere, after five years of AEDP implementation their overall status had regressed compared to that of other Australians, both locally and nationally.

Although the employment rate among non-indigenous residents of the Australian Capital Territory declined, it fell to an even greater extent among indigenous people. Likewise, the gap between the unemployment rates of the two groups narrowed, but not because unemployment among indigenous people fell, rather because the increase in the unemployment rate was greater for the rest of the population. At the same time, the rate of new job growth among indigenous people was higher than for the rest of the population, though from a much lower base. This lack of impact on labour force status in the face of a proportionally greater increase in new jobs is explained by the above average growth rate of the indigenous working-age population.

Despite a fall in relative labour force status, indigenous people performed at least as well, in terms of securing new employment, than other job-seekers during the intercensal period. In the context of a depressed labour market, this suggests that focused job programs left some mark, although public and private sector jobs for indigenous people appear to have expanded at a much slower rate than might have been expected given the strength of program efforts to encourage such employment.

Worsening labour force status is reflected in an overall lack of improvement in the relative income status of indigenous people in the Australian Capital Territory. This is underscored by the fact that those with jobs substantially enhanced their incomes, a contrast which is given added
weight when account is taken of growing income inequalities for the population as a whole. In line with this trend, there is some indication that a growing number of indigenous people in the Australian Capital Territory are lagging behind in an economy which is increasingly divided between the 'haves' and 'have-nots', although this is far less the case in the Australian Capital Territory than elsewhere in Australia. Furthermore, the emergence of relatively high local welfare dependence among indigenous people in the Australian Capital Territory has less to do with chronically low levels of labour force participation or excessive unemployment, as elsewhere in Australia, and is more directly a consequence of comparison with the high economic status of other Australian Capital Territory residents. Compared to the Australian population as a whole, the dependency level of indigenous people in the Australian Capital Territory is close to the national average.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Northern Territory

Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, economic status, equity, equality, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, labour markets.

This analysis of change in the relative economic status of indigenous people in the Northern Territory during the intercensal period 1986–91 provides the first comprehensive basis for considering the impacts of the AEDP since it was implemented in 1987. The results, in terms of stated policy objectives, were mixed. On the one hand, employment and unemployment rates among the indigenous population showed distinct signs of improvement leading to a closing of the gap in these indicators (albeit slowly) with the rest of the Territory population. On the other hand, when the data are disaggregated by section-of-State and the nature of
employment growth is investigated, the achievement is revealed to be an entirely rural phenomenon and related to the rapid expansion of the CDEP scheme since the last census.

It is estimated that expansion of the CDEP scheme accounted for more than the total increase in employment for indigenous people between 1986 and 1991. The net increase in rural jobs for indigenous people was only 1,412 whereas the estimated increase in CDEP scheme jobs recorded by the census was 2,056. The policy message from this is clear. Without increased participation in the CDEP scheme, overall employment in the Northern Territory would have decreased and rural labour force status in particular would have been far worse than indicated by 1991 Census data. In urban areas, the rate of job growth for indigenous people was far less than in rural areas but achieved mostly without access to the CDEP scheme. Furthermore, indigenous residents of urban areas recorded higher growth in jobs than the rest of the urban population suggesting that the public and private sector initiatives of the AEDP left some mark in a depressed labour market. However, improvements in labour force status, particularly for males, that may have been expected to occur in urban areas due to the application of private and public sector employment programs administered by the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) do not emerge from the data.

Given a relative improvement in the labour force status of indigenous people in the Northern Territory there would appear to be statistical grounds for expecting that the income gap between them and the rest of the population may have narrowed. Overall, however, the census indicates little change in income relativities. Mean income for the indigenous adult population as a ratio of that for the rest of the population, showed a distinct fall from 0.46 in 1986 to 0.42 in 1991. This lack of improvement in relative incomes may partly be explained by the fact that all net employment growth for indigenous people has been generated by participation in the CDEP scheme which provides for income at levels more or less equivalent to welfare entitlements. At the same time, it suggests that employment outside of the scheme continues to be concentrated in relatively low-wage occupations. This is of crucial policy significance as it signals that improvements in labour force status alone are not sufficient to enhance income status. Of equal importance to job creation is the nature of the work involved and the income it generates.

The proposition that overall income levels are influenced as much by the nature of work as by the rate of employment growth is supported by data showing change in the income status of indigenous people by section-of-State. Despite the fact that intercensal improvement in the labour force status of indigenous people has been most noticeable in rural areas, income levels remain inversely related to settlement size. For example, the ratio of mean income for rural-based indigenous people compared to those in urban areas remained essentially unaltered at 0.69 in 1986 and 0.68 in 1991. This contrasts with the pattern of income among the rest of the Territory's
population which displays very little variation according to section-of-State. The persistence of the urban/rural income gap among indigenous people is not surprising given the composition of much rural employment as part-time work with remuneration based on approximate welfare equivalents via the CDEP scheme. Notwithstanding signs of improvement in labour force status, rural areas remain structurally disadvantaged compared to urban areas where a much greater proportion of jobs are full-time and award-based.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population mobility, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, research, government policy.

A project underway at CAEPR aims to establish, for the first time, comparative national parameters of indigenous population mobility with particular reference to four distinct mobility perspectives: the overall propensity to migrate, the net effect of migration on spatial redistribution, patterns of migration flow and resulting spatial networks, and the spatio-temporal sequence of individual movements over the life course.

The first step in this process involved a comprehensive review of the scope and content of existing research on indigenous and non-indigenous population mobility. This summary examination was necessary to identify gaps in understanding and thereby outline likely priorities for future research. The results show that quite different concerns and methodologies are evident in the literature on indigenous population mobility compared with that pertaining to the movement of the Australian population generally. A good deal is known about the non-indigenous population with respect to its propensity to move and spatial redistribution. In contrast, there is very little known about the movement propensities of the indigenous population, while knowledge about spatial redistribution of the indigenous population is mostly restricted to case studies of urbanisation.
This is indicative of a variable disciplinary bias in the analysis of migration but also the availability of data given that the census remains the primary source of information regarding change in usual place of residence at national, regional and local levels. The census has provided readily available data on the contribution of migration to regional population change. Although the same data has been available for the indigenous population, analysis of indigenous population mobility has been far less concerned with establishing overall propensities to move while the degree of attention applied to spatial redistribution impacts of migration has been limited in scope to a consideration of movement to large cities, with little effort made to examine intra urban shifts, or shifts between different levels of the settlement hierarchy.

The paper thus brings to light the major deficiencies in understanding some of the basic facets of indigenous movement propensities and spatial redistribution relative to what is known for the rest of the population. As far as information regarding migration flows and the sequencing of population movement is concerned, little is known for either population. In order to overcome these gaps in understanding, standard techniques of migration analysis using census data are proposed.

Key cross-references
Povinelli, E.A. 1993; Taylor, J. and Bell, M. 1994b.


Available from
CAEPR: $6.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population mobility, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, research, government policies.

This paper provides, for the first time, comparative national parameters of indigenous population mobility. Using a 54 region internal migration matrix from the 1991 Census preliminary findings are presented in regard to three perspectives on mobility: the relative propensity for indigenous people to migrate; the effects of migration on spatial redistribution, particularly in regard to regional patterns of net migration gain and loss, and the relative balance of population flows between metropolitan and non-
metropolitan areas; and, the pattern of inter-regional migration flows to define spatial networks of movement.

Although indigenous people migrate at a similar rate to the rest of the population, at least in the sense measured by the census as involving an intercensal change in usual place of residence, it is clear that the mobility behaviour of indigenous people is not simply compliant with the pattern observed overall. While some accordance may be discerned, substantial differences between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians are evident in the regional pattern of movement propensities, the age and sex differentials of movement, the redistribution impact of migration, and the spatial pattern of migration flows and networks. Significant spatial variation in mobility is also apparent between indigenous people in different parts of the country.

Migration is far more efficient at re-distributing the indigenous population in areas located away from northern Australia and remote parts of Western Australia. Most inter-regional moves in remote areas cancel each other out whereas elsewhere there is a greater tendency for net gain or loss to occur. This has implications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission regional councils in their estimation of demand levels for services. For example, in most remote regions relative stability in population levels is characteristic. In other regions, however, migration contributes substantially to population change either through net losses, as in western Queensland, or net gains, as in south east Queensland. At the same time, the analysis of migration flows clearly reveals patterns of movement between networks of places that often straddle current regional council boundaries. This begs the question of what constitutes an appropriate population to plan for in any region as regional councils may not be just servicing their own clients as defined by the locally enumerated population.

The pattern of movement observed among indigenous people is a response to quite different imperatives than those generally advanced to explain migration in Australia. The more subdued age profile of movement, particularly in the usually mobile young adult age groups, suggests a relative detachment from mainstream social and economic processes. On the one hand, this may simply reflect the fact that fulfilment of indigenous priorities is achieved closer to home without the necessity of migration. On the other hand, it may be that a combination of human capital deficits, policy prescriptions and cultural preferences, preclude the possibility of migration. Whatever the case, the pattern of indigenous spatial interaction appears to be a far more localised phenomenon than for the population in general. This adds strength to the logic of regionalising indigenous affairs policy.

**Key cross-references**

Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
New South Wales.

Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), economic status, equity, equality, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, labour markets, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

This analysis of change in the relative economic status of indigenous people in New South Wales during the intercensal period 1986 to 1991 provides the first comprehensive indication of the impacts of the AEDP in the State since it was implemented in 1987. The results, in terms of stated policy objectives, appear to be mixed. On the one hand, employment and unemployment rates among the indigenous population showed distinct signs of improvement leading to a closing of the gap in these indicators (albeit slowly) with the rest of the State's population. On the other hand, when the data were disaggregated by section-of-State the achievement was revealed to be a predominantly rural phenomenon due to the introduction of CDEP schemes.

In contrast with the expansion of the CDEP scheme, employment in urban-based public and private sector jobs showed a much slower rate of growth. While this was counter to expectations, given the strength of program efforts to encourage urban employment, it may be that the impact of AEDP public and private sector programs, in the context of a depressed mainstream labour market, was to simply ameliorate what might otherwise have been a far worse outcome. In terms of acquiring new jobs in urban labour markets, it is clear that indigenous people performed at least as well, if not better, than other job-seekers during the intercensal period and this suggests that focused labour market programs left some mark.

There was a relative lack of improvement in the income status of indigenous people in New South Wales. Set in the context of much improved labour force status this emphasises the need for quality, as well as quantity, in job creation schemes if the overall aims of the AEDP are to be achieved. From a labour market perspective, one difficulty continues to be the substantial proportion of indigenous adults of working age who are not in the labour force.

Aggregate State-level data showing economic change clearly have the capacity to conceal important intra-State and gender variations. In brief,
marginal improvements in labour force status evident at the State level were reversed for indigenous males in urban areas and enhanced in rural areas. Despite this, rural incomes remained firmly behind those in urban areas. Likewise, the economic status of indigenous women showed distinct improvement compared to that of men, which in income terms at least, regressed. This clearly underlines the importance of assessing policy impacts on the economic status of indigenous people at varying scales of analysis and for different sub-groups in the population.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Tasmania.

Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), economic status, equity, equality, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, labour markets.

Evidence from the 1986 Census indicated that, after the Australian Capital Territory, indigenous people resident in Tasmania had substantially higher economic status than those living elsewhere in Australia. Furthermore, the gap in economic status relative to that of other Tasmanians was much less evident than in other States and Territories. Although this was partly due to the lower than average economic status of non-indigenous Tasmanians, it suggests that the potential for achieving the AEDP goals of statistical equality in labour force and income status was greatest in Tasmania.

This analysis of change in the relative economic status of indigenous people in Tasmania during the intercensal period 1986 to 1991 provides the first comprehensive indication of the impacts of the AEDP in the State since it was implemented in 1987. The results, in terms of stated policy objectives, are ambiguous. On the one hand, there was no change in the relative labour force status of indigenous Tasmanians compared to others in the State. The gaps in employment and unemployment rates that existed in 1986 were as much in evidence in 1991 while the rate of labour force participation persisted at a similar level for both groups. At the same time, the rate of new job growth among indigenous people was much higher than
for the rest of the population. This lack of impact on labour force status in the face of a proportionally greater increase in employment was explained by very high growth rates among the indigenous working-age population.

In the context of a depressed labour market, indigenous people performed at least as well, if not better in some cases, than other Tasmanian job-seekers during the intercensal period. This suggests that focused labour market programs left some mark, most noticeably among indigenous males who at least gained some new employment at a time when other Tasmanian males experienced a substantial net loss of jobs. Likewise, indigenous people secured new jobs in Hobart and other centres in the context of an overall decline in urban employment. At the same time, urban-based public and private sector jobs for indigenous people appear to have expanded at a much slower rate than might have been expected given the strength of program efforts to encourage such employment. More vigorous growth in employment occurred in rural areas, although this was also the case for the general population which may indicate that the pattern of job growth observed among indigenous people is part of a wider trend.

There was a relative lack of improvement in the income status of indigenous people in Tasmania, despite their proportionally higher employment growth. This emphasises the need for quality, as well as quantity, in job creation schemes if the overall aims of the AEDP are to be achieved. Indigenous people in Tasmania appear to lag behind in an economy which is increasingly divided between the 'haves' and 'have-nots', although the extent to which this is the case appears to be far less in Tasmania than elsewhere in Australia. Also, unlike other States and Territories, the continuance of relatively high welfare dependency in Tasmania has less to do with low levels of labour force participation and is more directly a consequence of employment in low wage occupations.

*Key cross-references*


*Available from*
CAEPR; $6.

*Geographic area*
Victoria.
This analysis of change in the relative economic status of indigenous people in Victoria during the intercensal period 1986 to 1991 provides the first comprehensive indication of the impacts of the AEDP in the State since it was implemented in 1987. The results, in terms of stated policy objectives, are ambiguous. On the one hand, there was little change in the relative labour force status of indigenous people compared to others in the State. The gaps in employment and unemployment rates that existed in 1986 were still as wide in 1991, while the rate of labour force participation persisted at a somewhat lower level among indigenous people of working age. At the same time, the rate of new job growth among indigenous people was much higher than for the rest of the population. As in Tasmania, this lack of impact on labour force status in the face of proportionally greater increase in employment is explained by very high growth rates among the indigenous working-age population.

In the context of a depressed labour market, indigenous people performed at least as well, if not better in some cases, than other job-seekers during the intercensal period suggesting that focused labour market programs left some mark. This was particularly noticeable among indigenous males who at least gained some new employment at a time when other males experienced a substantial net loss of jobs. Likewise, indigenous people secured new jobs in urban areas at a much higher rate than the rest of the population. More vigorous growth in employment occurred in rural areas, although the extent to which labour market programs contributed to this job growth is not certain and cannot be validated from census data alone. Apart from the employment impact of the Lake Tyers Community Development Employment Projects scheme, evidence of other AEDP effects would require close scrutiny of the Department of Employment, Education and Training’s program placement and post program monitoring data. It would seem that in urban areas particularly, the impact of AEDP public and private sector programs was to simply ameliorate what might otherwise have been a far worse outcome for indigenous people.

Marginal shifts in labour force status evident at the State level were more exaggerated when disaggregated by section-of-State. Among indigenous people, the decline in the employment rate and increase in unemployment was greatest in urban areas while a higher rate of job growth in rural areas was reflected in improved rural labour force status. Indeed, among indigenous males, rural areas displayed the highest employment rate. Overall, the labour force status of indigenous women showed clear signs of improvement while that of men deteriorated. While there was no relative improvement in the overall income status of
indigenous people, indigenous females fell further behind in economic status compared to their male counterparts as well as compared to other females in the workforce. These variations clearly underline the importance of assessing policy impacts on the economic status of indigenous people at varying scales of analysis and for different sub-groups in the population.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR: S6.

Geographic area
South Australia.

Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), economic status, equity, equality, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, labour markets; Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.

This analysis of change in the relative economic status of indigenous people in South Australia during the intercensal period 1986 to 1991 provides the first comprehensive indication of the impacts of the AEDP in the State since it was implemented in 1987. The results, in terms of stated policy objectives, appear to be mixed. On the one hand, employment and unemployment rates among the indigenous population showed distinct signs of improvement leading to a closing of the gap in these indicators (albeit slowly) with the rest of the population. On the other hand this achievement is revealed to be a predominantly rural phenomenon and related to the expansion of the CDEP scheme since the last census.

In contrast with the growth of rural employment, public and private sector jobs in Adelaide and smaller urban centres showed a much slower rate of increase. However, in terms of acquiring new jobs in urban labour markets, it is clear that indigenous people performed at least as well, if not better, than other job-seekers during the intercensal period and this suggests that focused labour market programs have left their mark.

The was a relative lack of improvement in the income status of indigenous people in South Australia despite much improved labour force status. From a labour market perspective, one difficulty continues to be the substantial proportion of indigenous adults of working age who are not in the labour force. This accounted, in large part, for the persistence of
relatively high levels of welfare dependence. Given that much new employment growth involved a shift into CDEP scheme employment of individuals formerly on unemployment benefit or outside the labour force, it could be argued that levels of welfare dependence were actually higher than revealed by the census. This is because income derived from such employment merely represents the transfer of social security entitlements under a different guise. As a consequence, rural incomes remained firmly behind those in urban areas. For example, the ratio of mean income for rural-based indigenous people compared to those in Adelaide decreased from 0.87 in 1986 to 0.80 in 1991.

While improvements in the labour force status of indigenous people occurred regardless of residence by settlement size, a distinction was evident between Adelaide and the population elsewhere. Among males, the increase in employment rate and decline in unemployment was clearly highest in non-metropolitan towns and rural areas, with those in Adelaide showing only slight improvement. This variation was less apparent among females, although those living in rural areas experienced considerably greater enhancement of their employment status. Overall, indigenous females fared better than their male counterparts largely due to their greater ability to secure employment in Adelaide, as well as a general tendency to increase their level of labour force participation. One point worth noting is that the variation in changing labour force status between indigenous males and females followed the pattern found in the workforce generally. This may indicate that in Adelaide, where opportunities were restricted to mainstream labour markets, indigenous people were more prone to the economic forces shaping work patterns in the population generally.

Key cross-references


Available from
CAEPR; $6.

Geographic area
Western Australia.

Key words
Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP), economic status, equity, equality, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, labour markets, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme.
This analysis of change in the relative economic status of indigenous people in Western Australia during the intercensal period 1986 to 1991 provides the first comprehensive indication of the impacts of the AEDP in the State since it was implemented in 1987. The results, in terms of stated policy objectives, were mixed. On the one hand, employment and unemployment rates among the indigenous population showed distinct signs of improvement leading to a closing of the gap in these indicators (albeit slowly) with the rest of the population. On the other hand, when the data were disaggregated by section-of-State and the nature of employment growth was investigated, this achievement was revealed to have been a predominantly rural phenomenon due to the introduction of the CDEP scheme at additional locations during the intercensal period.

Contrasting with the expansion of the CDEP scheme, employment in urban-based public and private sector jobs showed a much slower rate of growth. The change in labour force status of indigenous males in Perth and other urban areas ran counter to the general positive trend with employment rates falling and unemployment rising. This contrasted with the situation among indigenous females in Perth and other urban areas whose labour force status notably improved. One point worth noting is that the variation in changing labour force status between males and females in urban areas followed the pattern found in the workforce generally. This may indicate that in Perth and other urban areas where opportunities were mostly in mainstream labour markets, indigenous people were more prone to the economic forces shaping work patterns in the population generally. However, indigenous residents of Perth fared better and recorded a much higher growth in jobs than the rest of the metropolitan population, albeit from a much lower numeric base. This suggests that the public and private sector initiatives of the AEDP left some mark, although precisely in what manner and to what extent cannot be determined from census data. At the same time, the scale of improvement in labour force status, particularly among males, that may have been expected to occur in urban areas due to the application of private and public sector employment programs administered by the Department of Employment, Education and Training do not emerge from the data.

Given the relative improvement in the labour force status of indigenous people in Western Australia there would appear to be statistical grounds for expecting that the income gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians may have narrowed. However, the census indicated little change with mean income for the indigenous adult population as a ratio of that for the rest of the population, showing only a slight rise from 0.57 in 1986 to 0.58 in 1991. From a labour market perspective, one difficulty continued to be the substantial proportion of indigenous adults of working age who were not in the labour force. This accounted, in large part, for the persistence of a relatively high level of welfare dependence. Also important here was the growth of employment in the CDEP scheme given that income derived from such employment merely represents the
transfer of social security entitlements under a different guise. As a consequence, the rural/urban income gap widened with the ratio of mean income for rural-based indigenous people compared to those in Perth, for example, decreased from 0.86 in 1986 to 0.71 in 1991.

Key cross-references


Available from Libraries.

Geographic area
Northern Territory, South Australia, Western Australia.

Key words
Land rights, land councils, resource development, mining, sacred sites, royalties, compensation, arbitration, Mabo, native title.

The political and legal tensions between Commonwealth legislative powers in relation to Aboriginal affairs and State powers in relation to land management has resulted in a complex set of regimes for control and management of resource development on Aboriginal land. This article examines the rights, protections and benefits for Aboriginal people in relation to resource development proposals and activities on their land in the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia. In the Northern Territory and South Australia, legislation based on Aboriginal land ownership protects indigenous interests in land and allows decision making and negotiation between relatively equal participants. In Western Australia there is no system of Aboriginal land tenure (outside native title) and the regime establishing Aboriginal reserves provides minimal procedures and involvement of Aboriginal people for dealing with resource development on reserve land; the legislation enacted in response to Mabo, made rights of traditional usage subordinate to all other interests in land. In relation to the impact of development on Aboriginal land a cultural protection model, 'program clearance', is outlined. Based on non-disclosure of cultural knowledge and clearance of work areas, it improves control by traditional owners. Variations in environmental laws, legislative protection for sacred sites, financial arrangements and arbitration provisions are briefly outlined. Advantages of disjunctive over conjunctive agreements are discussed; with regard to compliance with agreements, it is preferable
for compliance mechanisms to be built into legislation rather than depending on legal proceedings.

The effect of Mabo on statutory title and resource management regimes is yet to be determined. Disputes will occur where Aboriginal interests in land are not recognised and where adequate time and resources are not available for decision making about developments and protection of country. Where those interests are recognised there will be an increased willingness to participate in exploration and mining ventures.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*
Office of Northern Development; free publication.

**Geographic area**
Northern Territory.

**Key words**
Tourism policy, planning, indigenous control; Central Land Council (CLC).

Tilmouth writes about tourism on indigenous land from the CLC's perspective. The CLC's role in tourism involves representation and advocacy. The CLC consults with the traditional owners of, and any indigenous people interested in, indigenous land in the area of the CLC. In relation to their involvement in tourism, it is pointed out to indigenous people that they have the choice of direct involvement, indirect involvement or no involvement. The CLC currently has no clear process that ensures that indigenous people are able to get the information they need. The author outlines an ideal process to facilitate obtaining this information which includes consultations about: clientele, financial planning, management methods, legal requirements, employee requirements, employer obligations, and the taxation situation relevant to a possible project.
Tilmouth says that improvement is also required at the policy level; indigenous people need to be involved more in the planning and decision-making in the tourism industry. Lack of participation at this level leads to problems such as: unrealistic expectations by agencies and tourists; supply and demand problems; indigenous operators having to take on too much, too soon; and, an environment where non-indigenous people can monopolise the market.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1994c; Altman, J.C. 1993a, 1993b; Department of Tourism 1994.


Available from
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies; $16.95.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), self-determination, self-management, self-sufficiency, administration, native title.

Administration in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy in Australia is a challenging area. Turner's contention is that the Commonwealth has been responsible for the administrative reform process throughout Australia. It was also the Commonwealth that initiated and enacted the most significant land rights reform, the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976. Subsequent attempts by the Commonwealth to enact land rights legislation have failed on the altar of State's rights. This answers the question as to why reforms in indigenous affairs have been effected by governments through administrative mechanisms. Administrative reform is part of an ongoing process of government and is thus less contentious than other types of government activity. Indigenous people have had to become familiar with the practical side of administration, as well as with the principles, in an attempt to make the administration more responsive to their needs. Turner says that they must be even more innovative and creative in this regard. This is because at this time indigenous people have a rare opportunity to make ATSIC work for them. The elected representative arm of ATSIC was not created to assume
the roles of bureaucrats, but to balance the centrality of ATSIC's funding programs and its policy, advisory and coordinating roles. The representative arm must thus leave administration to the staff, and work out ways to improve the situation on the ground for indigenous people, where it matters. Indigenous people need to put the policies of self-determination and self-management into practice.

On the issue of accountability, it is Turner's contention that sooner rather than later the public will demand to see results from the $800 million-plus of taxpayers' money which is spent by ATSIC. Unfortunately that amount of money does not adequately meet the needs of people or address the conditions which currently exist in communities. The general public is not fully aware of the deeper problems facing indigenous people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people need to be realistic about how much longer government will provide this amount of money and should be looking at ways to generate some revenue to meet future needs. Turner says, 'We need to think of how we can accelerate self-sufficiency in our communities. The process which is urgently required is for us to negotiate our future place in our own country. At present we are trying to respond to the Commonwealth Government's High Court decision on native title, but we also need to develop a process whereby we as the indigenous peoples of Australia could negotiate a lasting settlement about our rights and position within the Australian system'.

Key cross-references


Available from
NARU; $20.

Geographic area
Ramingining, Milingimbi, Gapuwiyak, (Lake Evella), Galiwin'ku (Echo Island) and Minjilang (Croker Island), Arnhem Land, Northern Territory.

Key words
Enterprises, indigenous support organisations, independence, self-management, autonomy, employment, training.

The book outlines the history of the Arnhem Land Progress Association (ALPA). Formerly part of the Methodist Overseas Mission, it has operated
stores for 20 years in Arnhem Land communities: currently Ramingining, Milingimbi, Gapuwiyak, (Lake Evella), Galiwin’ku (Echo Island) and Minjilang (Croker Island). Describing itself as an indigenous organisation, its aim was to assist indigenous people towards self-determination and economic independence by forming an organisation which they (Yolngu) would eventually run and own. ALPA is administered from Darwin. It has a board of directors with indigenous representatives from each of the communities in which it operates stores. In an era when the operation of retail stores has proved extremely risky, ALPA has succeeded in servicing communities with well-stocked retail stores. In 1992 its net assets were $3,449,234. The organisation has provided store-training for its own staff and other organisations, set up scholarships for indigenous students, starter loans for community businesses, and underwritten community projects without assistance from government. It has done these things, according to the author, to demonstrate that ALPA is an indigenous organisation.

However, the elected directors of ALPA have never been indigenous and so far there have been no indigenous store managers. An ALPA human resources manager believes that this failure is due to the fact that the skills and vocational training of Yolngu were inadequate, and because the trainee managers selected were not culturally appropriate, their communities would not recognise their authority within the store. Wells suggests that because many stores were established during the 'assimilation era', training was designed to fit indigenous people for entry into non-indigenous society in semi-skilled and labouring positions. This is reflected today in the lack of knowledge of management amongst indigenous people. Thus, though ALPA was always committed to handing over the operation of stores to indigenous people it did not instigate mechanisms to ensure this transition.

Although ALPA has always describes itself as an indigenous organisation, the question of whether this is really the case has always hung over it and there has thus been negativity towards store services. Some indigenous members feel that it is not really their organisation but is a 'balanda' organisation because white people run it from Darwin. Also, there have been problems over lack of formal leases for land on which stores stand and over the levels of payment to traditional land owners. Since ALPA identifies itself with 'the people' and as running stores 'for the people' it did not feel that these arrangements were unfair. The distribution of dividends to communities has also caused disquiet; commercially successful stores are supposed to be generators of income for community needs but the distribution of dividends invariably has gone to a small number of people. The primary issue, according to Wells, is who has control over the management aspects of ALPA.

Key cross-references
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 1994f; Altman, J.C. 1993a, 1993b; Young, A.E. 1993b.

Available from
CRES; $25.

Geographic area
Arnhem Land, Northern Territory.

Key words
Ecologically sustainable development, resource management, traditional economy, health, employment.

One-hundred and fifty Anbarra people live at the mouth of the Blyth River in central coastal Arnhem Land. Meehan’s work with these people focused on contemporary subsistence strategies to gain an understanding of the processes of continuity and change in their economic activity. White’s work with the Ritharrngu and Wagilak-speaking Yolngu of north-eastern Arnhem Land focused on human biology, subsistence behaviour and the incorporation of European foods into the daily menu.

Indigenous communities in touch with their traditional lands have extensive knowledge of landscape, resources, and ecological interactions. Many traditional practices have benefits for the preservation of natural resources. However, the authors caution against romantic notions of traditional ecological knowledge, and stress the need for realistic assessment of this knowledge in the context of conservation of the physical environment. White and Meehan disagree with the belief that indigenous people’s views are necessarily conservationist. For example, traditional people often believe that the landscape and its resources are conserved largely through ritual means rather than by managing the countryside in a practical sense. The authors suggest that it was, to a large extent, the limitations of available technology which set limits on exploitation of the environment. This view is upheld by the fact that since European technology such as guns and off-road vehicles has been incorporated into existing traditional systems the ecology has often been altered in a detrimental way. An example of this is that the Anbarra people’s use of power boats has put the local dugong population at risk, and long-range hunting forays with guns have caused animal populations such as emu and kangaroo to decline.

White and Meehan say that, on the positive side, Anbarra and Ritharrngu-Wagilak environmental knowledge could be harnessed to contribute to ecosystem monitoring, such as providing information on the population and habits of birds and animals, and improving understanding
of practices which benefit plant and animal communities such as seasonal burning and the protection of vulnerable habitats. Traditional knowledge can also be the basis of employment of indigenous people in positions such as rangers in parks, and as health workers.

**Key cross-references**

**WILLIAMS, P.L. 1993. 'Mabo and inalienable rights to property', Australian Economic Review, 103 (3rd Quarter): 41-4.**

*Available from Libraries.*

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Mabo, native title, property rights, land rights, economic development, compensation.

The Mabo decision recognised inalienable indigenous rights over land. This contribution to 'Policy Forum on Mabo' addresses the issue of alienability in relation to native title. Restrictions on alienation have major disadvantages from an economic viewpoint, as trading offers the opportunity to transfer rights or obligations from persons who value them less to persons who value them more and for both parties to gain in the process. A brief economic history of legal restrictions on alienation covers the English practice of entailing, the detrimental effect of transaction costs on free trade, and the dangers of paternalism.

Economic theory generally upholds the interests of individuals, as assessed by themselves, as being of paramount importance. The High Court decision, however, has in some ways placed group interests above individual interests. The restriction on alienation is a result of traditional rights, which include inalienability, to use and appropriate the fruits of the land in accordance with local laws and customs. These rights continue as long as they continue to be exercised; whether this applies individually to each traditional owner or only to the group as a whole is unclear, and may create uncertainties where persons leave or re-enter a group.

From an economic viewpoint, the inalienability of land held under native title will encourage indigenous people to stay on their traditional lands as the cost of the land is zero, with no forgone opportunity since it cannot be sold, in comparison with costs involved, such as the opportunity
cost of investment in education, in establishing any alternative way of life style. This may effectively protect the traditional way of life. The fact that native title is inalienable is likely to reduce the market value of land held under native title, resulting in smaller compensation awards where land rights are infringed and lower land prices if land can be sold to members of the native title group; reducing the incentive and means to improve the land; and reducing compensation payable to native title holders whose rights have been infringed.

Key cross-references
Altman, J.C. 1993a; McEwin, R.I. 1993.


Available from
Australian Conservation Foundation, Melbourne; $60.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), national parks – ownership, land rights, indigenous culture, management, conservation, native title.

A primary brief for this Report was to discuss indigenous participation in national parks and protected areas with respect to the RCIADIC. The Royal Commission had identified indigenous involvement in protected area management as significant through the link it could create to traditional lands and through the empowering aspects of traditional knowledge being valued as a major contribution to conservation management. Woenne-Green et al. investigate the participation of indigenous people in protected areas such as national parks in each State by using various parks as case studies. Because the situation in relation to national parks differs between States the Report makes separate recommendations for each State.

The authors conclude that it is clear that throughout the country indigenous rights and interests in national parks and other protected areas, together with employment and enterprise opportunities based on those rights and interests, will remain subordinate to competing government and non-government interests unless indigenous organisations and communities are in a position to negotiate formal agreements with
governments from a position of secure tenure in land. This is the case despite a growing emphasis on funding for indigenous participation in various aspects of conservation and land management and the acknowledgment of the benefits of their skills and experience to conservation planning and implementation. This situation is likely to continue notwithstanding the enactment of various statutes which have acknowledged indigenous rights and interests in and traditional associations with land.

With the exception of four jointly managed national parks in the Northern Territory, the 1991 Queensland legislation, and proposed legislation in South Australia and New South Wales, where land has been reserved for purposes of conservation. Aboriginal rights and interests become, at best, a competing interest along with local government, tourism, resource development and non-government conservation agency concerns. Indigenous groups throughout Australia saw that the High Court's Mabo decision could provide the impetus for governments to negotiate joint management arrangements with indigenous people.

This Report contains a section by H. Wootten on the implications of the Mabo decision for land subject to native title which has been, or is proposed to be, incorporated in a national park under the current legislation of the Commonwealth, the Northern Territory, and each of the six States. An important finding is the extent to which native title may have been protected from extinguishment by provisions drawn for protecting private interests in land. Thus, for example, the probable position is that the Northern Territory legislation does not permit the declaration of a park over land in which native title subsists.

In no jurisdiction has native title been extinguished in national parks legislation. To establish native title to land in a national park, it will be necessary to establish, among a number of other things, that an indigenous group had rights in relation to the land according to Aboriginal law and custom in 1770.

**Key cross-references**


Available from
NARU: S5.
Geographic area
Australia-wide, but especially northern Australia.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), community development, community planning, self-management, self-determination.

The Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) and ATSIC launched a joint Community Development Planning Pilot Scheme in 1991. Six agencies and nine indigenous communities were initially involved. Participants in the Scheme were expected to follow, within a six month time frame, a four-phase model developed by consultants. The Scheme aims to address the demand for effective community level planning within indigenous communities. Trialing is to be followed by implementation, in a country-wide Aboriginal Community Development Planning Program. Although DEET and ATSIC monitored the pilots, no formal evaluation of the Scheme was carried out. This paper examines the background to the establishment of the Community Development Planning Pilot Scheme, and develops a framework for assessing aspects of it. The strengths and limitations of the four northern Australian pilots are also described, and an overview of the New South Wales and South Australian pilots is provided.

The conduct and outcomes of the Pilot Scheme highlight issues which need to be addressed if a program of Aboriginal community planning is to achieve success. Issues include appropriate time frames and processes for planning facilitation; appropriate roles and training for staff and consultants assisting communities with planning; and the need for long-term planning assistance that incorporates training of community leaders and members.

This paper argues that competing agendas are embodied in the Pilot Scheme, in which a conventional agency-driven planning model co-exists with rhetoric of community empowerment, ownership and control. These agendas reflect different conceptions of the future for indigenous people. They present challenges to indigenous communities to plan for themselves, and to government agencies mandated to deliver programs to indigenous communities and organisations to support indigenous empowerment.

Key cross-references
Following persistent calls for more and better local level planning, ATSIC Commissioners approved the establishment of a community and regional planning program in 1991. The Community Development Planning Program places emphasis on the involvement of indigenous people in the process of community planning. There is, however, little to guide practitioners in this style of planning. In this paper three principles of planning are considered: optimising community participation, competent technical planning, and effective bargaining and negotiation. It has previously been argued that the involvement of the public in planning has concentrated on the what, where and how of planning. The most critical decisions about what planning ought to achieve, or normative planning, remain the preserve of political and public service elites.

Examination of approaches to community development planning in the East and West Kimberley, Northern Territory, and north Queensland, offers insight into what approaches are being taken, what they are expected to achieve and how they are carried out. Approaches to community planning range from the use of short-term consultants to make or facilitate the development of plans, to the establishment of special community development planning units to assist communities, train indigenous specialists and develop indigenous planning processes. This examination can bring about an understanding of how the purpose of community development planning may be redefined when the decision-making process is opened up to indigenous involvement. Planning can then be seen not just as an activity that will be done better if indigenous people are involved in particular planning steps, but a culturally and politically motivated activity which will have different purposes dependent upon who is making the critical decisions: in the process competing agendas become visible.

The paper concludes that competing agendas are becoming the agenda of normative planning and cannot be resolved simply by a shift to a more 'bottom-up', community-based planning despite the importance of this shift. The indigenous agenda of empowerment demands that
indigenous perspectives inform and direct the normative decisions which are made 'from above' that affect their lives.

**Key cross-references**

**WOLFE, J. 1993c. 'Regional planning by ATSIC councils: purpose, process, product and problems', NARU Discussion Paper No. 18, North Australia Research Unit (NARU), Darwin, 65pp.**

*Available from*
NARU; $5.

**Geographic area**
Australia-wide.

**Key words**
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission regional councils, regional planning.

ATSIC regional councils across Australia are required by legislation to prepare, revise and work to implement, regional plans. This paper argues that effective planning by regional councils has a number of requisites. The main ones are decision-making authority, recognition, adequate resources and legitimacy. Indigenous regional councils are discussed in these terms. Case material compiled for a 1992 review of community and regional planning being undertaken through eight ATSIC offices in northern Australia is drawn upon to examine the context, processes, potential outcomes and problems associated with ATSIC regional planning.

Many regional councils in northern Australia have devoted considerable energy to the task of regional planning. Some councils have used planning consultants, other have used professional facilitators or ATSIC regional staff to guide the activities of identifying regional goals, visions and strategies. A few have done most of the planning themselves with paid assistance from within the indigenous community.

The paper concludes that a combination of indigenous regional and community organisational level planning has the potential to shift the system from a top-down one determined by external interpretations and decisions about what is best for indigenous people to a system through which local needs are identified locally and addressed through indigenous controlled and run agencies. These agencies would operate at the regional, sub-regional and local level. However, the potential is continually in jeopardy; the current work is only a first step towards meeting this potential. A great deal of patience, time and commitment is now needed to
deal with changes in relationships and the emergence of structures and support systems that new ways of planning set in motion.

*Key cross-references*
ATSIC 1993c; Sanders, W. 1994b; Wolfe, J. 1993d.


*Available from*
NARU; $5.

**Geographic area**
Canada and Australia.

*Key words*
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) ATSIC regional councils, regional planning, self-management, indigenous autonomy.

The 60 elected ATSIC regional councils, are required by the terms of the ATSIC legislation to 'formulate, and revise from time to time, a regional plan for improving the economic, social and cultural status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents of the region'. This paper considers whether any relevant lessons for indigenous regional planning in Australia can be drawn from experiences of regional planning and regional development in other settings, such as Canada. As part of the ATSIC Community and Regional Planning Section's review the author examined the way regional planning was being carried out in relation to indigenous Australians by interviewing regional councillors, community leaders, professionals involved in indigenous community planning, staff of indigenous organisations and reviewing file materials. The author studied materials relating to Canadian indigenous people, which tended to portray the a top-down, highly bureaucratic approach of the 1960s and 1970s. By contrast, 1987 arrangements involved Yukon Indians in participation in planning activities. There were also other examples of indigenous participation in regional resource planning and management which have brought important changes to the consultative and decision-making processes adopted, and the management systems which were implemented.

The author states that ATSIC regions have few, if any, of the geographical, economic, social, or cultural characteristics usually associated with a region. The regional councils are all entities created by ATSIC in the last two years, and derive what little power and authority
they have from ATSIC. There is little evidence that indigenous people were asked about their conception of what would constitute a workable region. However, ATSIC regions are consistent with the way in which regional delineation has occurred in Australia generally, owing more to politics and to the arbitrary decisions of statisticians than to theoretical constructs, or to the way people themselves construct their region.

Wolfe states that there are few precedents in regional development or regional planning of a relatively powerless and poorly educated minority being expected to plan for itself under the auspices of an elected council whose limited authority is derived not from its constituents but from its creators: councils which, moreover, have been granted limited financial and human resources to undertake the task. The author concludes that the Canadian experience offers little guidance because of the difference in planning experience, although many cautionary lessons can be learned by examining it.

Key cross-references


Available from
NARU; $5.

Geographic area
Western Australia, South Australia, Northern Territory, Canada, New Zealand.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), government programs, community development, community planning, training.

Prevailing approaches to planning mean that agencies either carry out limited program or project-specific planning; experiment, as the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) and ATSIC did with staff-implemented community planning; or as ATSIC does now, through its Community-based Planning Program, provide funds to communities and organisations which then usually hire consultants to prepare community plans under short-term agreements.

The West Kimberley Community Development Units (CDUs), the South Australian DETAFE Community Management Training Unit, and the Northern Territory Open College in Alice Springs team take another
approach. They offer training to increase the capability of indigenous communities to plan effectively. They treat community planning as a component of effective community management by working with indigenous communities long-term. These organisations apply a model which places emphasis both on what indigenous people can do for themselves with a minimum of outside financial and other assistance and on what the community requires external agencies of State, Territory and Federal Governments to do for it. They employ a team approach and combine staff planning and community development expertise with group facilitation skills.

The cost of maintaining these support and training organisations is often compared, unfavourably, with the cost of hiring consultants to prepare community plans. This comparison is unfair as, unlike consultants, such planning organisations have taken on the long-term task of supporting communities through the entire planning process and of training indigenous people to carry out planning and training. Unrealistic improvements in the quantity, pace and quality of indigenous community planning are often expected by funding agencies. Planning in communities often takes place in the context of lack of information, fierce internal community politics, powerful external pressures, and shifting government policies. Nevertheless, according to the author, these organisations and their approaches hold a promise of sustainable ways doing community planning. This is because they are committed to the development of indigenous models and processes because they recognise that conventional planning models and processes are not compatible with indigenous needs. The West Kimberley CDUs illustrate a further step; the emergence of community development planning organisations which are staffed, managed and controlled by indigenous people. Wolfe says that they can be seen as part of a process which is gaining momentum in Canada and New Zealand as well as Australia whereby indigenous people not only administer and deliver services to their communities on behalf of government agencies, they also control the shape of services by exercising decision-making authority through their own organisations.

Key cross-references

Available from
NARU; $15.

Geographic area
Ramingining, Milingimbi, Gapuwiyak (Lake Evella), Galiwin'ku (Elcho Island) and Minjilang (Croker Island), Arnhem Land; Central Australia and the North American Arctic.

Key words
Indigenous enterprises, indigenous support organisations, employment, self-management.

The Arnhem land Progress Association (ALPA), was set up by the United Church of Northern Australia in 1972. It has operated viable retail stores in remote Northern Territory communities, currently Ramingining, Milingimbi, Gapuwiyak, (Lake Evella), Galiwin'ku (Echo Island) and Minjilang (Croker Island). Isolation and sparseness of settlement have affected the stores' operations, resulting in high costs, disruption of supplies and difficulty in providing the support needed for staff. ALPA's history, organisation and ideals including its strong commitment to worker training and employment are described. ALPA's training scheme has not thus far met expectations, as none of the ALPA stores has yet come under Aboriginal management.

Decisions on all matters concerning the association are theoretically taken by ALPA's Board of Directors, all of whom except the Chairman and Executive Director, are indigenous. In reality, technical matters such as those concerning the stock ordering systems, transport, and running the financial and accountancy services are dealt with by the Executive Director and head office staff, most of whom are non-indigenous. Young suggests that this indigenous/non-indigenous split in responsibility is not likely to change until indigenous people have been given the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills.

ALPA's membership is drawn from the five communities in which it has stores. It is profitable, with sales of almost $12 million in 1990–91 and a surplus of $1.1 million. Such a business would conventionally be registered as a company. As an association ALPA has members rather than shareholders and the rights of these members in relation to the ownership and control of stores has never been clarified, a matter which has become more pressing as the Association has increased its profits, and as its
indigenous membership have become more concerned with exerting control over their own institutions.

ALPA’s surplus profits are distributed according to a formula agreed upon by the Board of Directors. Each community receives 20 per cent of their store profits plus 5 per cent of rotating profit. In 1990–91 with only five stores remaining, the communities received over $187,000 altogether. Subsequent redistribution of moneys is done by community councils. Some of the remaining surplus profit is used to assist indigenous enterprises and provide educational opportunities.

Young compares ALPA’s store support services with those provided by other indigenous organisations facing similar problems and dilemmas: Arctic stores in Canada and Alaska and desert stores in Central Australia. A table summarises the characteristics of the support organisations studied.

**Key cross-references**


*Available from*  
University Co-operative Bookshop; $13.95.

**Geographic area**  
Australia-wide.

**Key words**  
Land rights, Mabo, access to resources, hunting and gathering, outstations.

Young’s focus is on the relationship of Australia’s indigenous people to the environment in the past, present and in the future. The book outlines the way that traditional indigenous people utilise the land and its resources; how this relationship has been affected by non-Aboriginal settlement; and the recent land rights process. The book gives the type of general information which would be useful to the school student. Case studies and illustrate concepts introduced in the text.

The author says that current indigenous land and resource use includes elements drawn from Australia’s pre-European settlement history and from the last 200 years of settlement. New and old technologies and the combination of resource husbandry with the use of resources for commercial purposes merge past and present.

A chapter summarises past land rights process and their geographical implications in terms of contemporary land ownership in Australia. Aboriginal land now accounts for 13 per cent of the Australian continent. Young suggests that the Mabo decision could present opportunities for
indigenous land claims. Also, on the basis of indigenous people's continuing native title, unalienated land and land held by States for conservation purposes (parks and forest reserves) should be returned to indigenous people. Leasehold land might also be available for claim, particularly when leases come up for renewal. Although such claims could occur in all States and Territories the effects in Western Australia, with its large areas of crown land, parks and forest reserves, could be highly significant. Elsewhere, in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, Mabo-style claims might be the only channel for dispossessed indigenous groups to regain some of their land. The complexity of the issues raised during negotiations between Commonwealth and State governments, indigenous and non-indigenous land holders and resource development groups in industries such as mining and tourism suggests that it will be some time before the final outcome of the Mabo decision becomes clear.

Key cross-references


Available from
NARU; $25.

Geographic area
Australia-wide.

Key words
Land rights, land use, land management, development, self-sufficiency, hunting and gathering, funding, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), equity, resource management.

Indigenous people stress that the social and political aspects of their lives are as important as, and are interdependent with, the economic aspects. In Australia, governments usually emphasise the economic aspects of development. Such problems have hindered indigenous people in their attempts to achieve their development goals. Indigenous groups are concerned with regaining control over land. Despite Mabo, access to land is never going to be equal for all groups. If control of land and its resources is the basis for the future, it follows that land management should be the
foundation for community development and long-term planning. Assisting the community to boost its income through short-term employment may do little to aid development.

On land which they control, indigenous people often practice multiple land uses which may fall into both the cash and non-cash spheres. For example, cattle grazing may be combined with subsistence production. This calls for a different type of land management, perhaps reducing the size of the cattle herd and excluding them from areas seen as valuable for hunting and gathering. Under their present responsibility structures, government agencies find it difficult to deal with such multiple land uses. However, indigenous people need their help as they generally face chronic lack of resources with which to practice their chosen forms of land use, their land is often degraded, and they lack skills as managers.

To find solutions to indigenous development Young suggests that instead of creating a new government agency specifically charged with all aspects of indigenous land management, the existing Federal and State/Territory agencies should be used more effectively. This is because these agencies already have the technical knowledge to deal with most land use and management demands. They must, however, become aware of how indigenous land holders can benefit from their expertise. ATSIC could forge the necessary links with relevant government departments and through regional councils could act as the communication channel with indigenous land holders.

Key cross-references


Available from
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies; $16.95.

Geographic area
Kimberley region, Western Australia.

Key words
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), administration, self government, self-determination, indigenous economy, Mabo, colonialism.
According to Yu, Australia has arrived at a time in its history when the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people must change, and it is indigenous people who will make the change. Aboriginal people know through experience that they cannot rely on governments to achieve equity and justice. The Mabo High Court decision provides indigenous people with a legal basis to commence negotiations with Commonwealth and State Governments and resource developers on new self-determination arrangements. The experience of the Kimberley region demonstrates the failure of governments to deliver services and manage resources for the region's indigenous population. The majority of these people remain impoverished and marginalised because governments refuse to change the colonial structures which have existed for over a century. Decisions about land management, land ownership, funding for the provision of services and issues relating to resource development in Western Australia are being made by people in Canberra and Perth who have different priorities to those who live in the Kimberley.

ATSIC spending in the Kimberley region is more than $62 million a year and social security payments to indigenous people about $25 million annually. Pastoral colonialism has been replaced by welfare colonialism and towns in the region now depend for their existence on the indigenous economy. Instead, indigenous people could use this influx of money for securing a sustainable social and economic base. The Kimberley Land Council and the Aboriginal resource agencies have embarked on a process aimed at major structural change. Yu calls on the State and Commonwealth Governments to begin negotiations which will lead to a regional agreement and eventually to self-government, which will address land ownership and management, funding and revenue mechanisms and the structures which provide mainstream services to the region.

The author sees the first requirement for indigenous people's relationship with ATSIC to be revised. ATSIC is supposed to be the vehicle of self-determination yet it is largely controlled by the bureaucrats, policies and procedures of old. If self-government is to succeed ATSIC must commit itself to the RCIADIC, particularly those recommendations which deal with self-determination. ATSIC must change its current direction on national programs and policies and recognise that regional control is the essential component of self-determination. The Kimberley, as a discrete region with developed effective representative organisations which could form into an executive structure, is an ideal region to test ATSIC's national commitment to regional devolution in Aboriginal affairs policy and administration.

Key cross-references
PURCHASING OUTLETS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission  
PO Box 17  
Woden ACT 2606

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commission  
PO Box 17  
Woden ACT 2606

ACIL Economics  
103 Northbourne Avenue  
Turner ACT 2601

Attorney-General’s Department  
Robert Garran Offices National Circuit  
Barton ACT 2600

Australian Bureau of Statistics  
PO Box 10  
Belconnen ACT 2616

Australian Conservation Foundation  
(now Australian Nature Conservation Foundation (ANCA))  
340 Gore Street  
Fitzroy VIC 3065

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies  
GPO Box 553  
Canberra ACT 2601

Cape York Land Council  
PO Box 2496  
Cairns QLD 4870

Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR)  
Faculty of Arts  
The Australian National University  
Canberra ACT 0200

Centre for Economic Policy Research  
Research School of Social Sciences The Australian National University  
Canberra ACT 0200
Office of Northern Development
PO Box 4450
Darwin NT 0801

Public Policy Program
Australian National University
Canberra ACT 0200

Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC)
University of New South Wales
PO Box 1
Kensington NSW 2033

Tangentyere Council
4 Elder Street
Alice Springs NT 0870

University Co-operative Bookshop
The Australian National University
Canberra ACT 0200
# KEY WORD INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Word</th>
<th>Page(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commercial Development Corporation (CDC)</td>
<td>1, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC)</td>
<td>2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19, 31, 39, 54, 60, 67, 69, 71, 74, 96, 100, 108, 116, 118, 119, 126, 129, 130, 131, 137, 141, 145, 146, 148, 158, 161, 162, 195, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 210, 211 regional councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population</td>
<td>6, 8, 43, 46, 48, 49, 89, 105, 109, 118 change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginals Benefit Trust Account</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to resources</td>
<td>34, 55, 56, 58, 113, 143, 154, 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>141, 195, 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbitration</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and crafts</td>
<td>12, 19, 45, 102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>71, 74, 196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape York Land Council (CYLC)</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle industry</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Land Council (CLC)</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal resource use</td>
<td>55 zone management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonialism</td>
<td>94, 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth/State joint responsibilities</td>
<td>4 local government relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development</td>
<td>202, 203, 206 infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme</td>
<td>2, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16, 19, 36, 37, 39, 41, 43, 44, 47, 65, 67, 69, 71, 74, 75, 88, 90, 96, 97, 121, 128, 145, 148, 150, 151, 155, 165, 172, 174, 178, 181, 186, 190, 191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>28, 68, 111, 135, 193, 199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>114, 123, 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>106, 143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural tourism</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>71, 102, 123, 210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantage</td>
<td>6, 53, 62, 94, 102, 116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecologically sustainable development</td>
<td>129, 198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic development</td>
<td>2, 14, 17, 23, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32, 53, 63, 75, 77, 79, 104, 118, 129, 135, 145, 146, 166, 169, 170, 199 equality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
status 28, 43, 44, 85, 100, 156, 178, 180, 181, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191
education 43, 44, 47, 49, 51, 52, 54, 65, 74, 80, 82, 83, 86, 89, 94, 152
Employment 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 33, 36, 39, 41, 44, 47, 49, 51, 52, 54, 65, 66, 69, 74, 78, 80, 82, 83, 85, 88, 91, 93, 94, 96, 97, 112, 114, 117, 121, 134, 140, 148, 151, 152, 155, 163, 165, 169, 174, 176, 196, 198, 208
Enterprises 1, 10, 24, 25, 54, 72, 74, 78, 81, 86, 97, 113, 114, 134, 165, 196, 208
Environmental interests, 160 planning 127
Equality 41, 69, 93, 102, 172, 174, 178, 180, 181, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191
Equity 6, 17, 33, 63, 102, 116, 123, 148, 178, 180, 181, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191, 210
Exploitation 45
Finance 63
Fisheries – comparison with New Zealand 32
Fishing 55, 58, 113, 143, 168
Funding 19, 24, 53, 63, 137, 148, 210
Government administration 161, 162 funding 67, 81, 93, 161, 162 legislation 113, 140, 168 policy 6, 9, 10, 12, 21, 39, 54, 56, 67, 80, 81, 99, 109, 110, 112, 119, 130, 138, 140, 154, 161, 162, 163, 177, 183, 184 programs 9, 20, 21, 62, 69, 79, 80, 90, 93, 94, 108, 116, 121, 137, 138, 142, 145, 152, 154, 156, 163, 206 services 20, 67, 116, 154
Health 54, 117, 198
Housing 13, 14, 49, 53 funding 108 government policy 156 need 119, 172 need in remote areas 7 Hunting and gathering 59, 114, 142, 209, 210
Income 6, 13, 14, 17, 39, 43, 44, 45, 49, 85, 88, 91, 93, 112, 113, 117, 142, 172, 174, 176
Independence 94, 141, 196
Indigenous autonomy 9, 39, 73, 106, 138, 205 control 194 culture 200 economy 71, 211 foods 59 marginalisation 123 men 88 organisations 36, 78, 79, 118 people in the economy 80, 81, 82, 142 rights 79 support organisations 196, 208 women 88, 91, 116, 152 youth 80, 116, 83
Industry of employment 86
Inequality 94
Intellectual property 45
Labour force participation 47, 82, 142 status 8, 43, 44, 47, 80, 85, 89, 145, 163
Labour market 63, 82, 88, 112, 178, 180, 181, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191 programs 83, 112 status 83, 86
Land
acquisition 31, 146 councils 23, 27, 133, 193 management 31, 74, 98, 146, 148, 149, 210 National Land Fund 28, 29, 31, 121, 146 rights 26, 29, 34, 40, 71, 72, 73, 75, 77, 94, 98, 104, 111, 122, 133, 134,
135, 138, 142, 160, 166, 168, 193, 199, 200, 209, 210
use 148, 210

Local government 106, 224

Mabo (see also native title) 26, 61, 68, 75, 77, 104, 111, 122, 135, 139, 149, 168, 170, 193, 199, 209, 211
Management of resources 168, 200
Marginalisation 75
Marine strategy 32, 130
Mineral resources
rights 26, 104, 111, 135, 170
Mining 27, 29, 31, 54, 77, 123, 124, 131, 160, 169, 193
agreements 73
economic impact of 23, 133
resource development 40
National parks 58, 160, 134, 200
Native Title (see also Mabo) 21, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 34, 40, 54, 55, 56, 58, 61, 68, 77, 98, 104, 111, 122, 127, 135, 138, 143, 146, 149, 169, 170, 193, 195, 199, 200
Nutrition 59, 142
Outstations (homelands) 71, 74, 134, 209
Pastoral leases 77, 104, 111
Pastoralism 54
Planning 194
Poverty 106, 117
Prescribed body corporate (PBC) 98
Property rights 26, 61, 98, 122, 135, 160, 170, 199
Racism 116
Reconciliation 68
Regional
agreements 28, 60, 77
councils (see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander regional councils ATSIC)
development 32, 75, 130, 139
disadvantage 174
economy 79
government 157
planning 5, 60, 127, 204, 205
Remote locations 46, 105
Research 54, 63, 114, 145, 183, 184
Resource
development 193
management 114, 139, 148, 198, 210
rights 26, 32, 104
Resources 122
Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) 2, 4, 9, 10, 12, 20, 21, 62, 63, 97, 106, 137, 140, 154, 165, 200, 211
Royalties 23, 26, 27, 28, 31, 40, 73, 131, 133, 193
Royalty associations 23, 133
Rural
areas 51
development 9
Sacred sites 193
Sea rights 55, 56, 58, 129, 138, 143, 166, 168
Self
determination 2, 4, 20, 40, 56, 60, 63, 72, 99, 100, 106, 113, 124, 126, 128, 131, 134, 138, 141, 151, 158, 161, 162, 165, 169, 195, 202, 211
employment 81, 86
government 68, 75, 79, 100, 124, 126, 127, 130, 131, 138, 141, 211
identification 48, 105
management 1, 53, 56, 58, 60, 78, 106, 116, 126, 129, 158, 195, 196, 202, 203, 205, 208
reliance 2, 4, 12, 53
sufficiency 63, 114, 195, 131, 210
Social
indicators 82
justice 20, 21, 45, 73, 93, 102, 121
Socioeconomic
change 176
status 37, 133
Sustainable development 114, 138, 139, 146, 149

Taxation 118

Torres Strait Islander statistics 43, 44

Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) 32, 43, 44, 130, 157

Torres Strait marine strategy 139

Tourism 10, 19, 23, 25, 54, 63, 97, 99, 114, 124, 137
  policy 24, 25, 66, 194

Trade unions 36

Traditional economy 198

Training 9, 16, 53, 54, 65, 86, 140, 152, 165, 196, 206

Unemployment 13, 49, 51, 52, 65, 69, 89, 90, 91, 121, 150, 155

Urban locations 48, 51

Welfare
  dependence 90, 91, 117
  system 112
GEOGRAPHIC INDEX

Adelaide, 15, 52, 98, 117, 190, 191
Alaska, 209
Ali Curong, 53
Alice Springs, 14-15, 118, 206
Anonguna, 53
Angatja, 64
Angurugu, 53
Arnhem Land, 78, 104, 196-8, 208
    central coastal, 198
    coastal, 114
    eastern, 114, 168
    north-eastern, 198
    north-western, 64
    western, 40
Atherton Tableland, 168
Bathsut Island, 2, 24, 113
Belyuen, 142-3
Byth River, 198
Bourke, 14
Brisbane, 152-3, 179
Cairns, 38, 168
Canada, 56, 100-1, 130, 205-7, 209
Canberra, 212
Cape York, 44, 64, 70-1, 104, 123-5, 135
    western, 168
Central Australia, 1, 59, 78, 118-9, 133, 151, 208-9
Coastal zone of Australia, 34
Cobourg, 58
Coffs Harbour, 14
Cooktown, 14, 71
Coroong National Park, 97
Coronation Hill, 160
Croker Island, 78, 113, 196-7, 208
Darwin, 78, 140, 197
Edward Pellow Islands, 114
Elcho Island, 78, 113, 208
Eva Valley, 141
Fitzroy Crossing, 77
Goulburn Island, 113
Great Barrier Reef, 56, 61, 139, 168
Gulf of Carpentaria, 135
Gung National Park, 58
Hobart, 188
Hopevale, 70-1
Indonesia, 129
Ipolera outstation, 64
Jabiru, 38
Kakadu, 25, 64, 160
Katherine, 2, 24
Kimberley, 61, 73, 79-80, 92, 117-8, 211-2
    east, 203
    west, 203, 206-7
Kings Canyon, 1
Kowanyama, 168
Kuranda, 64
Lake Evella, 78, 113, 196-7, 208
Lake Tyers, 189
Lockhart River, 124
Mabuig Island, 166
Maringinda, 113
Manyallaluk, 64
Mapoon (Marpuna), 70-1
Melville Island, 24, 64, 113
Millingimbi, 113
Mitchell River delta, 61
Mona Mora, 168
Mount Barkley, 72
Mt Todd, 2, 29-30, 169-70
Murganella, 113
New South Wales, 13, 29, 32, 49, 146, 166
New Zealand, 32-3, 56, 206-7
Nguiu, 53, 113
Ngukurr, 53, 114
Nhulunbuy, 14, 168
Nitmiluk National Park, 24
Noonkanbah, 73
North America, 107, 130
North American Arctic, 78, 208
Northern Australia, 24, 54, 59, 63, 75, 203, 208
Numbulwar, 114

Papua New Guinea, 129
Papunya, 37-8
Perth, 37, 92, 192-3, 212
Port Keats, 113
Port Lincoln, 165-6

Queensland, 13, 40, 51, 56, 70-1, 104, 123-5, 128, 134-5, 167-8, 177-9, 201
north, 203
south-east, 152, 185
west, 185

Shellbourne Bay, 123-4
South Australia, 14, 52-3, 73, 97, 111, 146, 165, 177, 190-1, 193, 201-2, 206
Southern Australia, 156, 167, 169
Stradbroke Island, 152-3
Sydney, 14, 38, 56

Tasmania, 14, 35, 37, 51, 175, 187-9, 210
Tennant Creek, 14, 141
Thursday Island, 138
Torres Strait, 32-3, 37, 42-4, 127, 129-31, 137-40, 157-8
Townsville, 106, 179
Townsville-Thuringowa, 106

Umbukumba, 114
United States, 56, 88, 112, 130

Victoria, 49, 51, 97, 175, 188-9, 210

Wallaga Lake, 167
Warburton, 14
Watarranka National Park, 1
Western Australia, 38, 47, 50-1, 56, 61, 73, 77, 79, 92-3, 117, 175, 177, 185, 191-3, 206, 210-2
Western Desert, 72, 102-3
Willowra, 72

Yirrkala, 113

is an annotated bibliography produced at the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research. The Australian National University, Canberra. It presents abstracts of policy-relevant published research for the years 1993 and 1994 with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development and labour market issues. Topics covered include employment, land and sea rights and native title, government policies and programs, mining, demographic trends and tourism. The monograph is the sequel to Aborigines in the Economy: A Select Annotated Bibliography of Policy-Relevant Research, 1985–90 and Indigenous Australians in the Economy: Abstracts of Research, 1991–92. The bibliography is indexed by subject and geographic region and contains an introduction by Professor Jon Altman, Director, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research.

This monograph will be of interest to indigenous Australians, policy makers, bureaucrats and researchers focusing on the economic situation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The comprehensive annotations provide important background material to facilitate informed discussion about a range of topical issues, including the implications of the Commonwealth’s Native Title Act 1993 and the implementation of recommendations arising from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

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