

A Brief History of Government Administration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Queensland

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The following history is an overview of the Government administration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland. More detailed administrative histories of regional agencies, government run settlements, and other agencies which played a part in the administration of indigenous affairs will appear in subsequent volumes of the Records Guide.

New South Wales and Queensland Administration prior to 1897

Prior to the separation of Queensland from New South Wales on 10 December 1859, the border police and subsequently the Native Police were 'the main [government] instrument of Aboriginal administration'.¹ The Native Police, established in 1848, patrolled what was to become Queensland under the command of Lieutenant Frederick Walker who was answerable to the Commissioners for Crown Lands.² Soon after separation, the administration of indigenous matters was transferred to the Colonial Secretary for Queensland, and an inquiry into the practices of the Native Police was undertaken by a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly in 1861. The Committee was also asked to report on 'how far it may be practicable to ameliorate the present condition of the Aborigines of this colony'.³ In 1864 the Native Police were brought under the control of the newly appointed Commissioner of Police.⁴ In 1865 the force was renamed the Native Mounted Police and the force continued to operate as a separate police unit until its disbandment in 1900.⁵

Prior to 1859, two surgeons had also been appointed to tend to sick Aboriginal people and their establishment continued until 1861, when they came under the control of the medical staff responsible to the Queensland Colonial Secretary.⁶ The position of Surgeon to Aborigines disappeared in 1863 but reappeared combined with the Office of Coroner in 1864.⁷ There were three medical officers responsible for treating Aboriginal people, stationed at Ipswich, Warwick and Rockhampton respectively and each receiving £20 per annum for their services in this field.⁸ Although these positions disappeared, a continuing sum of money was provided for medical attention. In 1860, £300 had been set aside with an additional £800 for blankets. By 1869 the actual amount for medical attention is included within a general sum for medical officers, while that for blankets is

contained within a vote for Colonial Stores.

At the time of Separation, through the instigation of the Attorney-General, an interpreter for Aborigines was appointed to the Supreme Court. Parallel with the sum set aside for this appointment was a further sum to be used for the defence of Aborigines in the Supreme Court.⁹

In June 1873, in response to a petition by certain Mackay residents, the Government appointed Trustees to control a temporary reserve near Mackay.¹⁰ The Government also appointed a Commission consisting of four Commissioners to deal with the petition and to inquire into what could be done to improve the condition of Aborigines in the Mackay district and in Queensland generally.¹¹ After a change of Government in January 1874, the Commissioners who had been responsible for the 1874 report in relation to the Mackay petition were made Superintendents of a permanent Reserve at Mackay.¹²

In May 1876, the Government appointed a Royal Commission of five men with Bishop Matthew Blagden Hale as chairman 'with a view to improving the conditions of the Aborigines in Queensland'. The Commissioners were to 'report from time to time to the Government' on conditions at Mackay and elsewhere and to submit recommendations.¹³

The Royal Commission conducted its affairs as a semi-independent agency, and is listed as reporting to the Colonial Secretary in the *Blue Book of the Colony of Queensland* volumes from 1878 to 1883 inclusive, and then is not listed again.

The year 1875 marked the commencement of the setting aside of money for the establishment and maintenance of Aboriginal reserves.¹⁴ From 1875 until 1884, the money was administered by the Department of Public Lands. A grant of money was made annually during this period. In 1885 the administration of the reserves was taken over by the Colonial Secretary and at this time the grant was increased to £1000.¹⁵

Although the Mackay reserve was abandoned in 1880, the Queensland Government pursued a policy of instituting reserves in a bid to control the indigenous population. The government also began to support various churches which had established missions by providing land and financial assistance. Before the turn of the century the government was supporting missions at Marie Yamba, Bloomfield River, Hopevale, Mapoon, Yarrabah and Deebing Creek. Government run reserves were later established at Barambah, Taroom, Woorabinda and Palm Island. The Anglican mission at Yarrabah came under government control in 1960.¹⁶ Throughout most of Queensland's history, the churches and the government have sought to control the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The records reveal that the relationship between churches and the State has always been uneasy and on many occasions confrontational.

Northern and Southern Protectors of Aboriginals - 1898 to 1904

The passage of the *Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act 1897* (61 Vic, No.17) , hereafter cited as the 1897 Act,

...was the first comprehensive Aboriginal protection act in Queensland and, indeed, in Australia; it ushered in the long era of protection and segregation during which Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders lost their legal status as British citizens and became, in effect, wards of the state.¹⁷

The 1897 Act resulted in the appointment of a Protector for all districts who was, in fact, the Commissioner of Police.¹⁸ In January 1898 two Protectors of Aboriginals were appointed, one for the northern and central regions of the State and one for the south. Walter E. Roth was appointed the Northern Protector and Archibald Meston the Southern Protector. Together they were responsible to the Home Secretary until April 1903 when the administration of the 1897 Act was briefly transferred from the Home Secretary to the Secretary for Public Lands.

When the 1897 Act was passed, Torres Strait Islanders were still under the administrative control of the Government Resident, Thursday Island. The position of Government Resident was first gazetted in 1885 and abolished in 1917.¹⁹ Prior to 1885, the Torres Strait Islands were under the control of the Police Magistrate, who had been transferred from Somerset to Thursday Island in 1877. In 1899 the shipping master in charge of the Shipping Office on Thursday Island was appointed a Protector of Aboriginals by Roth.²⁰ In the Government Resident's report for the year 1907, it was noted that the administrative powers formally exercised by the Government Resident should never have been delegated to the local Protector of Aboriginals; it was also stated that 'the provisions of the Aboriginal Acts should not apply to the natives of Torres Strait...'.²¹ After 1908, however the Government Resident was given the responsibilities of the local Protector and contributed to the annual reports of the Office of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals.

The extent to which Torres Strait Islanders were subject to the provisions of the 1897 Act is unclear as were the responsibilities of the Government Resident and the local Protector of Aboriginals on Thursday Island. Following the death of the last Government Resident in 1917 the administration of Torres Strait was controlled by the Office of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals through a local Protector on Thursday Island.

Office of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals - 1904 to 1939

On 30 March 1904 Roth was appointed Chief Protector with Parry-Okeden remaining Protector for all districts in his capacity as Police Commissioner. Roth was responsible to the Secretary of Public Lands until August 1905 when control reverted to the Home Secretary's Office. Late in 1935 the Home Secretary's Office became the Department of Health and Home Affairs. The Office of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals then occupied the same position relative to the

Department of Health and Home Affairs as it had under the Home Secretary's Office.

Regional administrative control of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of the State was achieved by dividing the State into Protectorates. Each Protectorate was administered by a local Protector of Aboriginals who was a police officer in all cases except for Thursday Island. The appointment of local Protectors began in 1898. Local Protectors had many responsibilities including the administration of Aboriginal employment, wages, and savings bank accounts. Local Protectors also played a significant role in the removal of Aboriginal people to reserves. By 1932 there were 95 Protectorates and widespread corruption had emerged within the administrative practices of the local Protectors. Despite numerous calls for investigation and an overhauling of the system, corruption continued long after the Office of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals was succeeded in 1939 by the Office of the Director of Native Affairs.

Apart from local Protectors, the appointment of a Protector to oversee the lives of young Aboriginal women was also made. Frances Meston, the wife of Archibald Meston, was the matron of a home for Aboriginal girls in South Brisbane having been appointed a Protector toward the end of 1899. Mrs. Meston was succeeded by Mary Easter Frew (later known as Mary McKeown) on 2 February 1900. This position evolved into that of Female Protector in 1910. In 1913 the positions of Senior Protector (Female) and Protector (Female) were created from the original appointment of Mary Frew. Both of these positions were held by women. On 25 March 1904,²² Mary Frew had also been appointed Superintendent of the Reserve for Aborigines in South Brisbane. The position of Protector of Aboriginals (Female) remained in existence until 1933 when Mrs. A.E. Sullivan resigned after 17 years in the position. Her resignation was probably a response to a report on the Office of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals conducted in 1932 which had called for the position of female Protector to be abolished.²³ The duties of the Female Protector were handed over to the female officers of the accounts branch and the responsibility of inspecting Aboriginal girls in employment was transferred to the Inspector of the State Children Department.²⁴

The 1897 Act and the subsequent amending Acts of 1901, 1927, 1928 and 1934 gave the Chief Protector of Aboriginals enormous control over the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Under the 1897 Act Aboriginal people were described as

- (a) An aboriginal inhabitant of Queensland; or
- (b) A half-caste who, at the commencement of this Act is living with an aboriginal as wife, husband, or child; or
- (c) A half-caste who, otherwise than as wife, husband, or child, habitually lives or associates with aboriginals.²⁵

The administrative responsibilities of the Chief Protector were wide ranging and during the period 1897 to 1939 the Protector's Office generated a large amount

of records including files relating to removals, exemptions, employment, sickness, death, marriage, government reserves, and crime. See Appendix 1 for a complete list of correspondence files. A brief description of some of the administrative activities which had a profound effect on the lives of thousands of indigenous people and the records generated by this administration is outlined below.

Removals

The Chief Protector through the provisions of the 1897 Act had the power to remove Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and place them on a reserve and to remove them from one reserve to another. The removal of indigenous people by anyone else was also controlled by the Chief Protector.²⁶ For example Aboriginal female domestic servants could not accompany their employers from one district to another or out of the colony without the permission of the Chief Protector. In the *Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of Sale of Opium Acts 1901*, (2 Ed. VII. No. 1.), hereafter cited as the 1901 Act, amendments to the 1897 Act also required employers of Aboriginal people to enter into a recognisance with their employee if the employee was to be removed for any period exceeding twelve months. A bond was paid to the Chief Protector to cover all expenses that may be incurred if the employer failed to return the Aboriginal person and pay his or her wages.²⁷

Records of removal, providing details of where people had been removed from and where they had been taken to, were kept by the Chief Protector's Office in a number of different formats. Removals had to be authorised by the Chief Protector. Large removal order forms were used to record the names of persons to be removed and the details pertaining to their removal. These forms were often accompanied by correspondence from the local Protector who often advised the Chief Protector of the need to remove Aborigines from a particular area. The removal forms and the correspondence can be found in the series of correspondence files of the Office of the Chief Protector of Aborigines; records of recognisance which are filed under the heading "bonds" are also found in this series. Other subject files in this series including the correspondence filed under "halfcastes, neglected children and unprotected women" could also contain information pertaining to removals.

Records of removals were also kept in a large register which was arranged chronologically. This register recorded similar details to those on the removal order form and also made reference to the relevant correspondence. Card indexes were also used by the Chief Protector's office to monitor removals. The cards were arranged alphabetically, mostly by surname.

Employment and Wages

The employment of Aboriginal people was tightly controlled by the Chief Protector and the local Protectors. Employers had to obtain a permit from the Chief Protector to employ any Aboriginal person and the permits were valid for only twelve months. Employers also had to enter into an agreement with the Aboriginal person they wished to employ. This agreement had to be witnessed

by a Justice of the Peace or a policeman. The agreements set out details of the wages and conditions of employment as well as detailing the name of the employer and employee. The agreements were valid for only one year.²⁸

The wages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were also controlled. Part 5, section 31 of the 1897 Act provided the Chief Protector with the power to control the wages of Aboriginal people living on a reserve and to apportion the net produce of their labour amongst all the Aboriginals on the reserve.²⁹ In 1901 the Chief Protector's control over Aboriginal wages and property was increased enabling the Protector to direct any employer of an Aborigine to pay their wages to the Protector or an officer of police. These wages would be kept in an account administered by the Protector on the Aboriginal's behalf.³⁰ Section 13 of the 1901 Act gave the Protector the right to manage all property belonging to an Aboriginal person.³¹

A number of trust accounts controlled by the Chief Protector came into being as the Protector's power to administer Aboriginal money and property increased. Regulations issued in 1904 allowed for all estates of deceased natives and unclaimed wages of deserters to be paid into an account called the Aboriginal Protection Property Account.³² The account, known as the Aboriginal Trust Account, was a savings bank account held in trust by the Protector and administered by local Protectors throughout the State on behalf of all Aboriginal people. This account was used to control access to their wages by Aboriginal people. A small percentage of the wage would often be paid in the form of pocket money with the rest being banked and only accessible with the permission of the Chief Protector or local Protectors.³³ In June 1919, the Aboriginal Provident Fund was officially established to accommodate the monies deducted from the gross earnings of all Aboriginal people. The funds, according to the annual report for the year ending 1921, were used for the general benefit of Aborigines and for the development of settlements and missions.³⁴

A separate Island provident fund known as the Island Fund was gazetted in December 1912 and commenced operation in January 1913.³⁵

Copies of the employment agreements and permits were kept by the Chief Protector as part of the main correspondence series. Other records in this series relating to employment and wages include applications to the Chief Protector by employers wishing to acquire Aboriginal labour, bonds (recognition forms), employment files, savings and trust account files, and files containing letters of complaint from Aboriginal employees. Other series listed in this Guide which relate to employment and wages include:

- Cash book - Brisbane and Country Natives
- Register of Monies received
- Register of deductions remitted by local protectors - Aboriginal Provident Fund
- Cash Book - Aboriginal Provident Fund
- Register of Brisbane Balances
- Cash book - Settlement and Brisbane accounts
- Cash book - credits - country natives

Exemptions

Section 33 of the 1897 Act made provision for the Minister 'to issue any half-caste, who, in his opinion, ought not to be subject to the provisions of this Act, a certificate... that such a half-caste is exempt from the provisions of this Act...'.³⁶ Certificates of exemption were sought by hundreds of Aboriginal people who wished to escape the oppressive conditions enforced upon them by the Act. In many cases the Aboriginal person wishing to become exempt would write or request the local Protector or anyone else to write on his or her behalf to the Chief Protector requesting to be exempt. The request would often be accompanied by letters of reference which confirmed that the Aboriginal person seeking exemption was of good character and did not associate with other Aborigines. These characteristics as well as the ability to manage one's own affairs were the basis on which exemptions were usually granted. Exemption from the Act did not always ensure, however, that money and property would not remain under the control of the Chief Protector. The *Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Act of 1939*, (3 Geo. VI. No. 6), hereafter cited as the 1939 Act, allowed the Director of Native Affairs to continue to control any money or property for any amount of time determined by the Director.³⁷ Exemptions could also be revoked at any time whereupon the person would again be subject to the conditions set down by the Act.

Correspondence relating to exemptions can be found in the Chief Protector's Office correspondence files series. The Chief Protector's Office also kept registers of exemptions issued and a card index to exemptions which was arranged alphabetically by surname.

Marriages

In the 1901 Act, section 9 stated that:

No marriage of a female aboriginal with any person other than an aboriginal shall be celebrated without the permission, in writing, of a Protector authorised by the Minister to give such permission.³⁸

The 1939 Act extended the provisions of the 1901 Act stating that any marriage between two Aborigines required the permission of the local Protector. If the Aboriginal persons lived on a reserve, the permission of the Superintendent was required. The 1939 Act also contained a provision which acknowledged tribal marriage as having the same status as a lawful marriage.³⁹

In the correspondence files series of the Office of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals there is a considerable amount of correspondence relating to marriages. In some cases copies of the marriage certificates are included with the correspondence. A register of marriages which was arranged chronologically was also kept by the Chief Protector's office as were index cards which were arranged alphabetically by the groom's name. Marriages were also recorded by the Registrar-General's Office. In a progress report written by Roth

in 1902, he stated that the Registrar-General's Office had advised that 'marriages between full-blooded aboriginals are registered, but in a marriage register specially provided for recording marriages by such persons'.⁴⁰ However, official registration of Aboriginal marriages was irregular prior to the 1930s.

Deaths

In the 1901 Act, section 11 specified that if any Aboriginal person died during a period of employment the employer was to notify the Chief Protector within a period of thirty days so that the death could be recorded.⁴¹

Aboriginal people were entitled to write a will but it was only valid if, according to section 16 of the *Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Acts Amendment Act of 1934*, (25 Geo. V. No. 38), hereafter cited as the 1934 Act, it had been 'approved and witnessed by the Chief Protector, or a Protector or officer authorised in that behalf by the Chief Protector'.⁴² The estates of missing or deceased Aborigines were usually administered by the Chief Protector and, where no persons could be found who were entitled to the estate, the estate became the property of the Office of the Chief Protector.

Aboriginal deaths were recorded in a register of deaths and also on card indexes which were arranged alphabetically by name. Correspondence relating to a person's death was also kept and can be located in the correspondence file series of the Office of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals. The deaths of indigenous people were also recorded by the Registrar-General's Office, although before the 1930s registration of these deaths was not routinely recorded.

Aboriginal Industries Board / Island Industries Board

In July 1930 the Office of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals bought, with funds from the Aboriginals Provident Fund, the business Papuan Industries Limited and changed the name to Aboriginal Industries. Papuan Industries had been a trading business which operated out of Badu Island and Dogai. Aboriginal Industries was run on behalf of the native fishing fleets by a Board consisting of the Protector, the Manager of Badu Station and the local State School Head Teacher.⁴³ The sale of produce generated by the fleet was controlled by the Board which came into official operation with the passing of the 1934 Act.⁴⁴ The *Torres Strait Islanders Act of 1939* saw the name of the Board change to the Island Industries Board.⁴⁵

Office of the Director of Native Affairs - 1939 to 1966

The 1939 Act was responsible for the change of title of Chief Protector to Director of Native Affairs, and the Minister responsible for the administration of the Act was the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs. The word 'Protector' was defined to include the Director of Native Affairs, the Assistant Director of Native Affairs or any person authorised to act in the absence of the Director.⁴⁶

In regional areas, police officers continued to act as local Protectors of Aboriginals.

The 1939 Act and the *Aboriginals Regulations of 1945* saw a continuation of the policies outlined in the 1897 Act and an increase in the powers of the Director of Native Affairs specifically in relation to Aboriginal property, Aboriginal courts, Aboriginal police and Aboriginal gaols. This increase in control was also extended to Superintendents on reserves.

This period also saw the introduction of the Aborigines Welfare Fund. According to the *Aboriginals Regulations of 1945*, the Aborigines Welfare Fund was to be 'established by the Treasurer for the general benefit of aboriginals'.⁴⁷ The fund was made up of monies derived from various sources including proceeds from the sale of produce and store sales from the reserves, deceased estates, fines or fees, and interest from all trust accounts.

In July 1948 the Office of the Director of Native Affairs was relocated to Thursday Island and a Deputy Director of Native Affairs was appointed in February 1949 to run the Brisbane office.⁴⁸ According to the Annual Report of the Director of Native Affairs for the year ending 30 June 1949, the transfer of the Director to Thursday Island was made in an

... effort to give the Northern Torres Strait Islanders and aboriginals a greater measure of control, direction, and management than had previously applied to them, and furthermore to give these people the same encouragement, industrial progress, and general amenities as prevails with Southern aboriginals.⁴⁹

The Director of Native Affairs, Cornelius O'Leary had in fact offered to go to Thursday Island to undertake post-war reorganisation and to take over the affairs of the Island Industries Board which had fallen into debt. O'Leary's move to Thursday Island also saw him take on the position of Protector of Islanders, Thursday Island.⁵⁰

At the beginning of 1957 the Office of the Director of Native Affairs moved back to Brisbane and the position of Deputy Director of Native Affairs was relocated to Thursday Island. The Deputy Director also took over the position of the Protector of Islanders, Thursday Island.

In 1962 the administration and control of the sub-department of Native Affairs passed from the Department of Health and Home Affairs to the Department of Education and Migration.⁵¹

Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs - 1966 to 1975

The *Aborigines' and Torres Strait Islanders' Act of 1965*, hereafter cited as the 1965 Act, came into force on 28 April 1966 and the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs was formed.

The Department was part of the portfolio of the Minister for Education and Migration. From January to August 1968, it was included within the portfolio of the Minister for Works and Housing, and was then transferred to the Minister for Lands until September 1969. A new portfolio of Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs was created on 4 September 1969, and continued to December 1974. The portfolio was redesignated Aboriginal and Islander Advancement from 23 December 1974.

Administrative changes brought about by the 1965 Act included the issuing of certificates of entitlement to all assisted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Any Aboriginal or Islander person living on a reserve was considered an assisted person and therefore subject to the provisions of the 1965 Act. The Director and a Magistrates Court could also declare any Aboriginal or Islander person not living on a reserve to be an assisted Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Certificates of entitlement could be cancelled at the request of an Aboriginal or Islander person or by the Director if he thought the person 'no longer required that he be subject to the applications of [the] Act as an assisted Aborigine or assisted Islander'.⁵²

The 1965 Act brought little change in other aspects of the administration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. In 1965 the Director still had the authority to remove an assisted Aboriginal or Islander from one reserve to another.⁵³ The administration of Aboriginal and Islander property remained the same with local Protectors, now called District Officers, still having the power to manage the property of an indigenous person if the officer decided that it was in the best interests of that person. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could request that the management of their property cease to be subject to the approval of the Director. With the passing of the *Aborigines Act 1971*, hereafter cited as the 1971 Act, the term 'assisted Aborigines' was no longer used. However those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons whose property was under management before the commencement of the 1971 Act continued to have their property managed by a District Officer unless a request for termination was made and the request was approved by the Director. No provision was made in the legislation until 1975 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to give consent to another person to manage their property.⁵⁴

Other changes brought in by the 1971 Act included the issuing of permits which allowed any person granted a permit to reside on a reserve. Permits could be obtained from Aboriginal Councils or from the Director and both had the power to revoke a permit. Aboriginal Councils were established by regulations issued in 1966 which 'gave communities limited local government powers'.⁵⁵

An Aboriginal Advisory Council and an Island Advisory Council, composed of chairmen from the Aboriginal and Island Councils, were also established by the 1971 Act. The function of the Councils was to advise the Minister on matters relating to Aboriginal and Islander Affairs.

In 1967 the Department was given additional responsibilities with the passing of the *Aborigines' Relics Preservation Act of 1967*. An advisory committee was established to advise the Minister on matters relating to the preservation of

Aboriginal relics and sites. Under this Act the Department was also responsible for any archaeological excavations carried out in the State and for the recording of Aboriginal sites and relics. In 1987 the *Cultural Record (Landscapes Queensland and Queensland Estate) Act 1987* repealed the Act and the responsibility of administering the new Act was transferred to the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement - 1975 to 1984

The Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement combined with the Water Resources portfolio on 23 December 1974. The Fisheries portfolio was added to the Minister's responsibilities from 25 March 1975 to 16 December 1977. In December 1977, the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs was established as a portfolio in its own right. It was combined with the Water Resources portfolio from 23 December 1980 until 6 December 1982, and with the Northern Development Portfolio from that date. It was then the responsibility of the Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs.

In 1978 the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement attempted to take control of both Aurukun and Mornington Island. The local Aboriginal Councils objected and were backed by the Uniting Church which had operated in a management capacity in both communities. Subsequent confrontation between the State and Federal governments resulted in the Commonwealth passing the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Queensland Reserves and Communities Self-Management) Act 1978*. This legislation was designed to stop the Department from assuming control of the communities and 'to allow them to move towards self-management'.⁵⁶ The Queensland Government reaction to Commonwealth intervention was to degazette the Aboriginal reserves thus negating the federal legislation. Eventually a compromise was reached between the two levels of government and in 1978 the State Government passed the *Local Government (Aboriginal Lands) Act 1978*. This legislation provided Aurukun and Mornington Island with 'limited local government status'.⁵⁷

During this period other changes in legislation included the passing of the *Aborigines and Islanders Acts Amendment Act 1979*.⁵⁸

In 1982 the *Land Act (Aboriginal and Islander Land Grants) Amendment Act 1982* was passed enabling the Government to grant land in trust to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The deed of grant in trust legislation was amended in 1984 with new sections regarding provisions for resumption of land granted in trust.⁵⁹

Department of Community Services - 1984 to 1987

In May 1984 the *Aborigines Act 1971* and the *Torres Strait Islanders Act 1981* were repealed and replaced by the *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* and the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984*. The Director of

Aboriginal and Islander Advancement became the Under Secretary for Community Services.

The Minister responsible for the Department was the Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. Aboriginal and Island Affairs was redesignated Community Services from 6 February 1986. Until December 1987, the Minister responsible was the Minister for Northern Development and Community Services.

Administrative changes brought about by the 1984 legislation included name changes to the Aboriginal Advisory Council and the Island Advisory Council which became respectively the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council and the Island Co-ordinating Council. The *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* also saw the reappearance of the Aboriginal Industries Board which according to the Department's Annual Report for 1984 was "established to ensure that consumer goods are available in sufficient quantities for retailing on each Reserve Community".⁶⁰ Subsequent Annual Reports give no details of the Aboriginal Industries Board.

Department of Community Services and Ethnic Affairs - 1987 to 1989

At the end of 1987 the administration of Ethnic Affairs was added to the Department of Community Services. The Northern Development portfolio was added from 31 August 1989 to 25 September 1989.

During this period, the Archaeology Branch which had been set up as a result of the 1967 Act was transferred to the Department of Heritage and Conservation.

Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs - 1989 to

A change in Government at the end of 1989 resulted in the formation of new departments and ministerial portfolios. The Department of Community Services was amalgamated with the Department of Family Services to form the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. A Division of Aboriginal and Islander Affairs was established with regional offices to administer services throughout the State.

A review in mid 1994 resulted in the establishment of an Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs to replace the Division of Aboriginal and Islander Affairs.

This Guide does not contain references to records created by the Division or the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs.

Endnotes

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