



# AIATSIS

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

## Manuscript Finding Aid

### MS 4073

## Transcripts of Conference on Land Rights and the Future of Australian Race Relations

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## Collection Summary

Collection no:	MS 4073
Title:	Transcripts of Conference on Land Rights and the Future of Australian Race Relations
Creator:	Conference on Land Rights and the Future of Australian Race Relations
Date range:	1981
Extent:	0.2 linear metres (1 x Type 1 archival box).
Repository:	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
Reference code:	N/A

## Cultural Sensitivity Statement

### Use of the material

When using this finding aid, and the collection described within it, clients are encouraged to be mindful and sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; particularly with regard to the use of this material. This includes:

### Language

This finding aid and collection may contain words and descriptions which may be culturally inappropriate and insensitive. The language used in this collection may not normally be used in certain public or community contexts. Clients may encounter terms and descriptions, which reflect the author's attitude or that of the period in which the manuscript was written, that may be considered inappropriate today.

### Deceased persons

Clients using this finding aid should be aware that in some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, hearing recordings, seeing images or the names of deceased persons may cause sadness or distress and in some cases, offend against strongly held cultural beliefs.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Content

### People & Organisations

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Bernie Button  
Louise Caupus  
Les Collins  
Roberta Felton  
Albert Geia  
Delphine Geia  
Granny Dolly  
Stephen Hagan  
Cherie Imlah  
Kenny Jacobs  
Flo Kennedy  
Chris Kirkbright  
Kevin Kitchener  
Eric Kyle  
Marcia Langton  
Edward 'Eddie' Koiki Mabo  
Les Malezer  
Darwin Metawinti  
Paul Richards  
Bob Weatherall  
Helen Stannard Williams  
Kevin Wynam

### Country

Bentinck Island (Qld Gulf Wellesley Islands SE54-02)  
Cape York Peninsula (Qld SC54, SD54, SD55)  
Cherbourg / Barambah (SE Qld SG56-10)  
Mer / Murray Island (Qld TSI SC55-05)  
Mornington Island (Qld Gulf Wellesley Islands SE54-01)

Palm Island (NE Qld SE55-10)

Torres Strait Islands (Qld TSI SC54, SC55-05)

Townsville (NE Qld SE55-14)

## Collection Overview

### Scope and contents note

The collection includes transcripts of papers, statements and discussions from the Land Rights and the Future of Australian Race Relations Conference, held at James Cook University, Townsville, 28-30 August 1981. The conference brought together land rights activists, Indigenous community leaders, lawyers, and historians as speakers.

As a direct result of this conference, Edward 'Eddie' Koiki Mabo, Flo Kennedy and David Passi from Mer, with legal backing from Greg McIntyre and other Conference attendees, began steps to mount a case for Native Title. This eventuated in the successfully argued cases of *Mabo v Queensland (No 1)* in 1988 and *Mabo v Queensland (No 2)* in 1992, and the codifying of native title rights with the *Native Title Act 1993* in Australian law.

Two copies.

### Provenance

Collection of unknown provenance, most likely transferred to AIATSIS prior to 1999 by a member of the joint Conference organisers - the Townsville Branch of the Aboriginal Treaty Committee, James Cook University of North Queensland Students Union and James Cook University Politics Society.

### Material separated from the collection

No material has been separated from this collection.

### Related material

B O435.91/B1 Black Australians; the prospects for change, edited by Eric Karl Olbrei; Townsville, Qld, James Cook University Students Union, 1982

BF C748.20/L1 Conference on Land Rights and the Future of Australian Race Relations, 1981

TCAE\_01 Audio recording of Conference on Land Rights and the Future of Australian Race Relations

For access to Audio / Visual material please go to the 'Contact us' page on the AIATSIS website at [aiatsis.gov.au](http://aiatsis.gov.au) or phone (02) 6246 1111

**Important:** Before clicking on the links to the catalogue entries please read our sensitivity message found on the 'Search the Collection' page on the AIATSIS website at [aiatsis.gov.au](http://aiatsis.gov.au)

## Access to the Collection

### Access conditions for this collection

Open access - reading.

Copying permitted for private study. Not for Inter-Library Loan.

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### Preferred citation

Items from this collection should be cited as: Title or description of manuscript item, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS Number, Series Number, Subseries Number, Item or Folder Number.

For example:

Session Three: Islanders and Land Rights, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS 4073, Series 1, Folder 3.

### Administrative history note

The Land Rights and the Future of Australian Race Relations Conference was held at James Cook University, Townsville, 28-30 August 1981, and organised by the Townsville Branch of the Aboriginal Treaty Committee, James Cook University of North Queensland Students Union and James Cook University Politics Society.

### References

AIATSIS Corporate file 1983/00030

### Archivist's note

The description of this collection has been transcribed and/or devised based on information on the material.

## Series 1, 28 August 1981 - 30 August 1981

### Folder

- MS 4073/1/1 Introduction and Session One: History of white settlement and the experience of contact between white settlers and Aboriginal people.  
Conference Introduction presented by Erik Olbrei and Mike Reynolds.  
Session 1  
Chairperson: Alec Hillan.  
Presenters: Henry Reynolds; Noel Loos  
Conference attendee contributions from: Dr. Shar Gordern; Cherie Imlah; Bob Dernon; Bernie Button; Kevin Kitchener.
- MS 4073/1/2 Session Two: Federal policies on land rights, an overview of the seventies.  
Chairperson: Les Collins  
Presenters: Lyndall Ryan; Dr. HC 'Nugget' Coombs  
Conference attendee contributions from: Dr. Shar Gordern; Greg McIntyre; Bertie Button.
- MS 4073/1/3 Session Three: Islanders and Land Rights.  
Chairperson: Margaret Reynolds  
Presenters: Edward 'Eddie' Koiki Mabo; Nonie Sharp  
Conference attendee contributions from: David Passey.
- MS 4073/1/4 Session Four: A case for a Treaty.

Chairperson: Les Collins

Presenters: Dr. HC 'Nugget' Coombs; Les Malezer

Conference attendee contributions from: Chris Kirkbright; Paul Richards; Edward 'Eddie' Koiki Mabo; Jenny Christenson; Flo Kennedy; Stephen Hagan; Bob Weatherall; Dr. Shar Gordern.

MS 4073/1/5

Session Five: Queensland Government Policies.

Presenters: Professor Garth Nettheim; Senator Jim Keefe

Conference attendee contributions from: Cherie Imlah; Les Collins; Dr. Shar Gordern; Nonie Sharp

MS 4073/1/6

Session Six: Federal Policy in action, the Northern Territory Case - Land Rights in the Northern Territory.

Presenters: Bob Collins; Shorty O'Neill

Conference attendee contributions from: Les Collins; Wendy Mansfield; Gordon Dean; Dr. Shar Gordern; Kevin Wynam; Tommy Bland; Helen Stannard Williams; Bob Collins.

MS 4073/1/7

Session Seven: Life on Queensland Reserves.

Presenters: Bertie Button; Kenny Jacobs; Darwin Metawinti; Delphine Geia; Eric Kyle

Conference attendee contributions from: Flo Kennedy; Roberta Felton.

MS 4073/1/8

Session: Possibilities for Commonwealth action.

Presenters: Al Grassby, Granny Dolly; Garth Nettheim

Conference attendee contributions from: Marcia Langton; Greg McIntyre; Bertie Button; Louise Caupus; Dr Shar Gordern; Delma Benson; Noel Loos; Albert Geia.

MS 4073/1/9

Session: Action taken by Torres Strait Islanders in relation to the repeal of the Torres Strait Islanders' Act.

Presenters: Ben Mills; Phillip 'Phil' Mills

Conference attendee contributions from: Michael Rossa; Edward 'Eddie' Koiki Mabo; Les Collins.

MS 4073/1/10

Session: A possible court test case for traditional Aboriginal title.

Chairperson: Shorty O'Neill

Presenters: Barbara Hocking; Greg McIntyre



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- Conference attendee contributions from: Dr Shar Gordern; Marcia Langton; Judith Wright; Nonie Sharp; Bob Collins.
- MS 4073/1/11      Session: International lobby.  
Presenters: Marcia Langton and Judith Wright  
Conference attendee contributions from: Dr Shar Gordern; Delma Benson; Bob Collins; Greg McIntyre; Les Collins; Bertie Button.
- MS 4073/1/12      Copy of MS 4073/1/1.  
See MS 4073/1/1.
- MS 4073/1/13      Copy of MS 4073/1/2.  
See MS 4073/1/2.
- MS 4073/1/14      Copy of MS 4073/1/3.  
See MS 4073/1/3.
- MS 4073/1/15      Copy of MS 4073/1/4.  
See MS 4073/1/4.
- MS 4073/1/16      Copy of MS 4073/1/5.  
See MS 4073/1/5.
- MS 4073/1/17      Copy of MS 4073/1/6.  
See MS 4073/1/6.
- MS 4073/1/18      Copy of MS 4073/1/7.  
See MS 4073/1/7.
- MS 4073/1/19      Copy of MS 4073/1/8.  
See MS 4073/1/8.
- MS 4073/1/20      Copy of MS 4073/1/9.  
See MS 4073/1/9.
- MS 4073/1/21      Copy of MS 4073/1/10.  
See MS 4073/1/10.
- MS 4073/1/22      Copy of MS 4073/1/11.  
See MS 4073/1/11.

**Box List**

MS 4073: Transcripts of Conference on Land Rights and the Future of Australian Race Relations

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1	1-22	1

Finding aid compiled by Grace Turner, February 2023.

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