

The future of connection material

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The range of materials PNTS /Yamatji researchers collate:

Claim generated materials/ primary sources:

- (a) Field notebooks
- (b) Genealogical notebooks
- (c) Genealogical databases (FTM)
- (d) Various archival/ethno-historical databases e.g. Bates and Radcliffe Brown, Tindale nominal indices (need to have the resources to produce more)
- (e) Mapping software (huge scope to integrate most other data formats)
- (f) Audio – analog recordings
- (g) Video – digital (inc. CR video, follow content of report)
- (h) Images – transparencies; digital
- (i) Restricted materials (m & f)
- (j) Connection Report

Secondary sources:

- (k) Library (published works)
- (l) Archival materials e.g. Native Affairs; Colonial Sec; Police Occurrence Books; Police files; Supreme Court documents; Registrar General's Death Index; Cemetery records; Lock Hospital records; Station Diaries; Station 'home movies'. Etc. etc.
- (m) Ethno-historical data in various forms audio, images, genealogies, notebooks e.g. Radcliffe Brown; Daisy Bates; Norman Tindale. (Curr's responses to survey questions)
- (n) Reports e.g. Heritage surveys, Paul Seaman inquiry,
- (o) Other materials donated or discovered not directly relevant to NT (claimants photo albums; Max Brown original 6 x 8s B&W 1950s – 1960s the halcyon days of Pilbara pastoral workers movement.)
- (p) Maps (inc digital)

All this information is filed claim by claim. General materials (not claim specific filed separately).

Volume – how much material?

relatively early days e.g. Pilbara - 19 claims; 2 determined (litigated), 2 in intensive mediation.

MC has nearly completed assembling most of the archival and ethno-historical materials however we will be generating large amount of primary data for the 15 remaining claims. Will continue to expand our electronic databases.

Points for discussion:

Present

We currently have no staff with training in archival management.

What staff we do have, that have knowledge of the materials especially of items of particular significance, may not be there in the future.

Storage dilemma – researchers need access to materials in the regions, the sub-tropical climate of the Pilbara is not kind to various forms of data. (Ever-present threat of cyclone/flood) Necessity of duplicating (at least) and storing off-site.

Does this breach conditions of the provision of this data?
Require expertise in management of.

Urgent need to build e-databases now to expedite the claim research process.

Future

It is my understanding all materials will be returned to the claim group post-determination.

In such an ethnographically sparse domain as the Pilbara (1 PhD in Anthropology to date) vital to ensure these materials are maintained and accessible to claimants post- determination. It is ultimately the claimants' decision as to how this material will be managed and accessed and they will need assistance to do this.

Access protocols / ethics – sensitive genealogical information; medical records that could cause distress to descendants. Require expertise / assistance in how to manage.

A connection report can be a cumbersome document for claimants. Archival materials may be inaccessible to many claimants. Need to think of creative means to make available to claimants the wealth of information contained therein. E.g. Geospatial programs that use map of the claim area as link to all other forms of data. Cost can be prohibitive. How many computers will there be in communities that can run such a program?

