

CHAPTER IV

THE STUDY AREA

4.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF EUROPEAN PENETRATION INTO THE REGION

The historical account offered in this section is designed to provide the reader with a general understanding of the nature of European penetration into the Port Augusta region. Although significant processes of contact occurred between the European settlers and the Aboriginal population they are not treated in detail in this section. The nature of culture-contact has been complex and has had long-standing effects upon the Aborigines of the region. It has played a crucial and specific part in the emergence of land rights action and the strategies of action adopted by the Adnjamathanha and Kokatha groups. The importance of the contact history in relation to Adnjamathanha and Kokatha land rights warranted special attention and is treated in detail in the following chapter.

The earliest European penetration into the region under consideration was in the form of isolated exploration journeys. Only four years after the arrival of the first European settlers in South Australia in 1836, Edward John Eyre led the first of three consecutive expeditions into the central and western region of the State (Eyre, 1845). His initial expeditions were followed rapidly by other exploration and survey teams eager to mark out the land ready for its development as a pastoral and agricultural area (Map 4:1).

MAP 4:1 Early Exploration in to the Study Area.

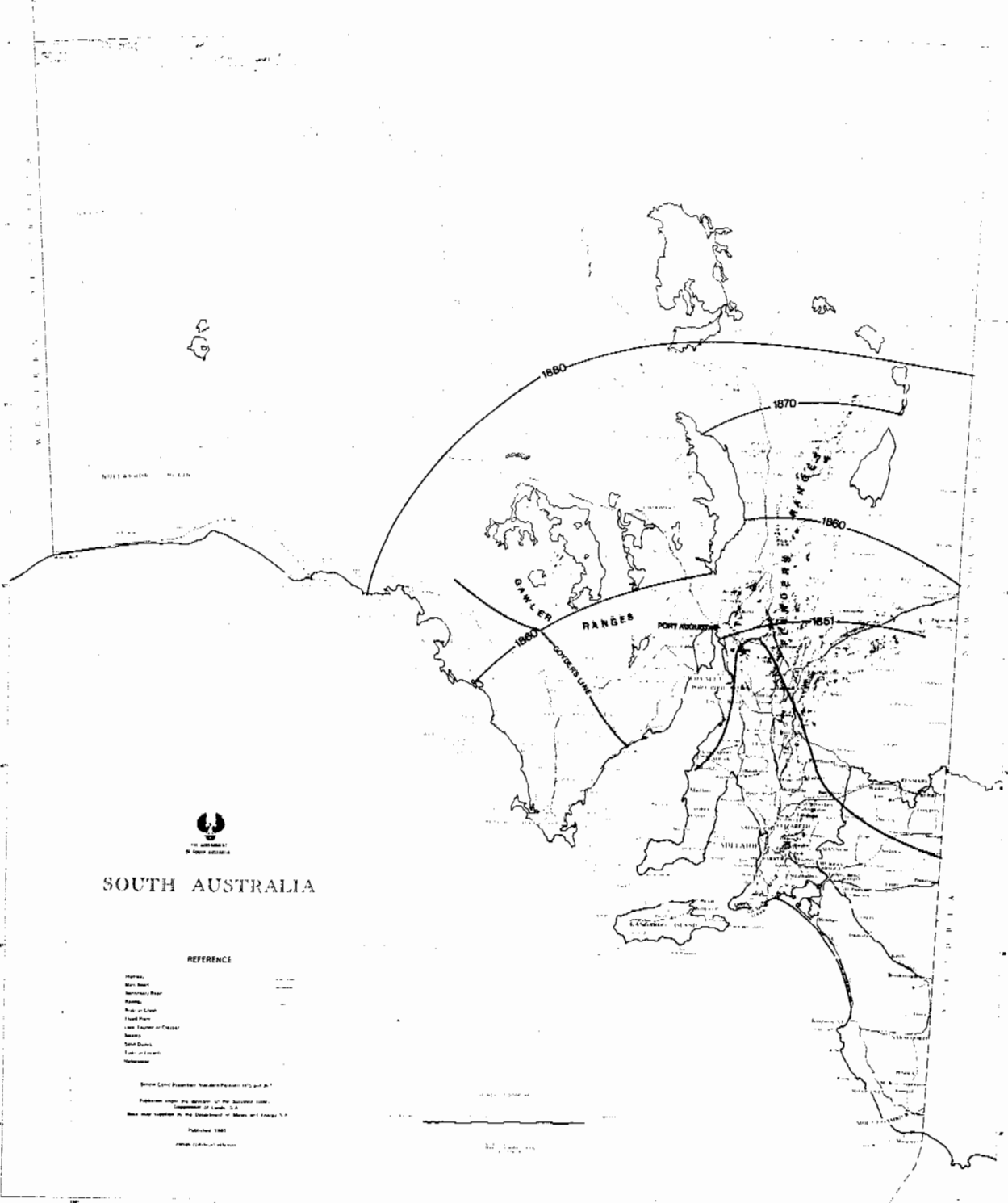


- Eye-1839-41
- Stuart-1858-9
- - - - - Forrest-1870
- · - · - Forrest-1874
- - - - - Giles-1875

Early moves to develop this northern region of the State for agricultural purposes were soon thwarted by the low rainfall season of 1865. In response to this initial setback the Surveyor General, George Goyder, conducted a climatic survey of the State and marked out the southerly limit of the 1865 drought. This line later became accepted as the northern limit of areas climatically suited to agricultural activity. (See Map 4:2). Few settlers heeded Goyder's observation and agricultural activities spread into the Flinders Ranges area during the 1870s, comforted by the optimistic misconception that 'rain would follow the plough' (Shaw, 1960; 169). By the end of the decade, however, the climatic conditions had proven Goyder's observations to be correct and most agricultural ventures in this northern part of the State had failed.

The expansion of pastoral activities into the north of the State proceeded with greater consistency than the agricultural ventures, however, pastoralism also suffered from the periods of low rainfall characteristic of this northern region. The first pastoral lease in the area of Port Augusta was established at Mt. Remarkable in 1846 (Wilton et.al., 1980; 11). In the three decades to follow pastoralism steadily pushed its way northwards. The northerly expansion of the pastoral industry proceeded marginally faster in the Flinders Ranges area than it did in the area north-west of Port Augusta for permanent water was often more easily located. Map 4:2 shows the basic waves of pastoral expansion in the region north and west of Port Augusta for the period of 1846 to 1890. By 1890

MAP 4:2 Waves of Pastoral Expansion in South Australia
1846-1890, showing Goyder's Line.



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

REFERENCE

- Highway
- Main Road
- Secondary Road
- Railway
- Rail or Line
- Tramway
- Low Light or Channel
- Island
- Small Island
- Island or Group
- Island

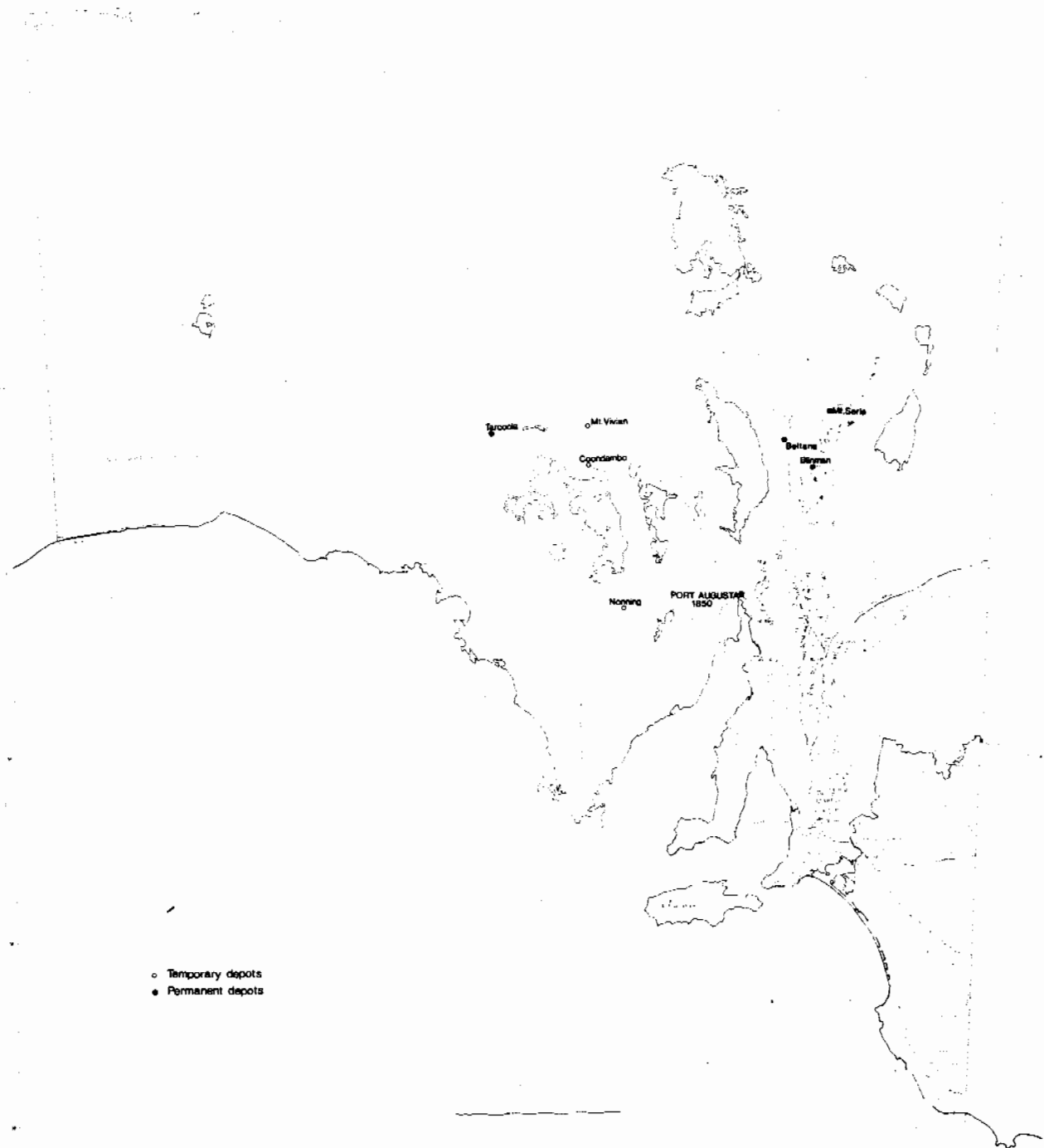
British Crown Possession (Northern Territory) and A.T.
 Published under the authority of the Government of South Australia
 Department of Lands, S.A.
 Also available in the Department of Mines and Energy, S.A.
 Published 1981
 PRINTED IN AUSTRALIA

the region was dominated by pastoral activity although some optimistic lessees over-stocked their land or fell victim to seasons of low rainfall and were forced to abandon their leases.

In response to the growing wool and cattle industry the town of Port Augusta was surveyed in 1854 with a view to establishing a much needed port facility. By the 1860s Port Augusta was an important shipping centre handling up to 10,000 bales of wool per year and receiving cargo directly from England (Daniels, 1951; 3). Camel and donkey teams were used to transport wool from the pastoral districts to Port Augusta. In 1878 the role of Port Augusta as a transport centre was consolidated with the construction of the Great Northern Railway which linked Port Augusta with Government Gums (Farina) to the north, and Adelaide to the south.

Accompanying the development of the pastoral and transport industries in this northern region was the establishment of a number of police depots. The earliest police depot was at Port Augusta but outposts were quickly established in other areas (Map 4:3). A major part of police duties in these outer regions was to distribute rations to the Aboriginal population. A permanent position of a Sub-Protector of Aborigines was allocated to the Port Augusta police corps and regular reports were sent to the Protector of Aborigines in Adelaide. The police stationed at outposts were answerable to the Sub-Protector based in

MAP 4:3 Main Police Depots in Study Area.

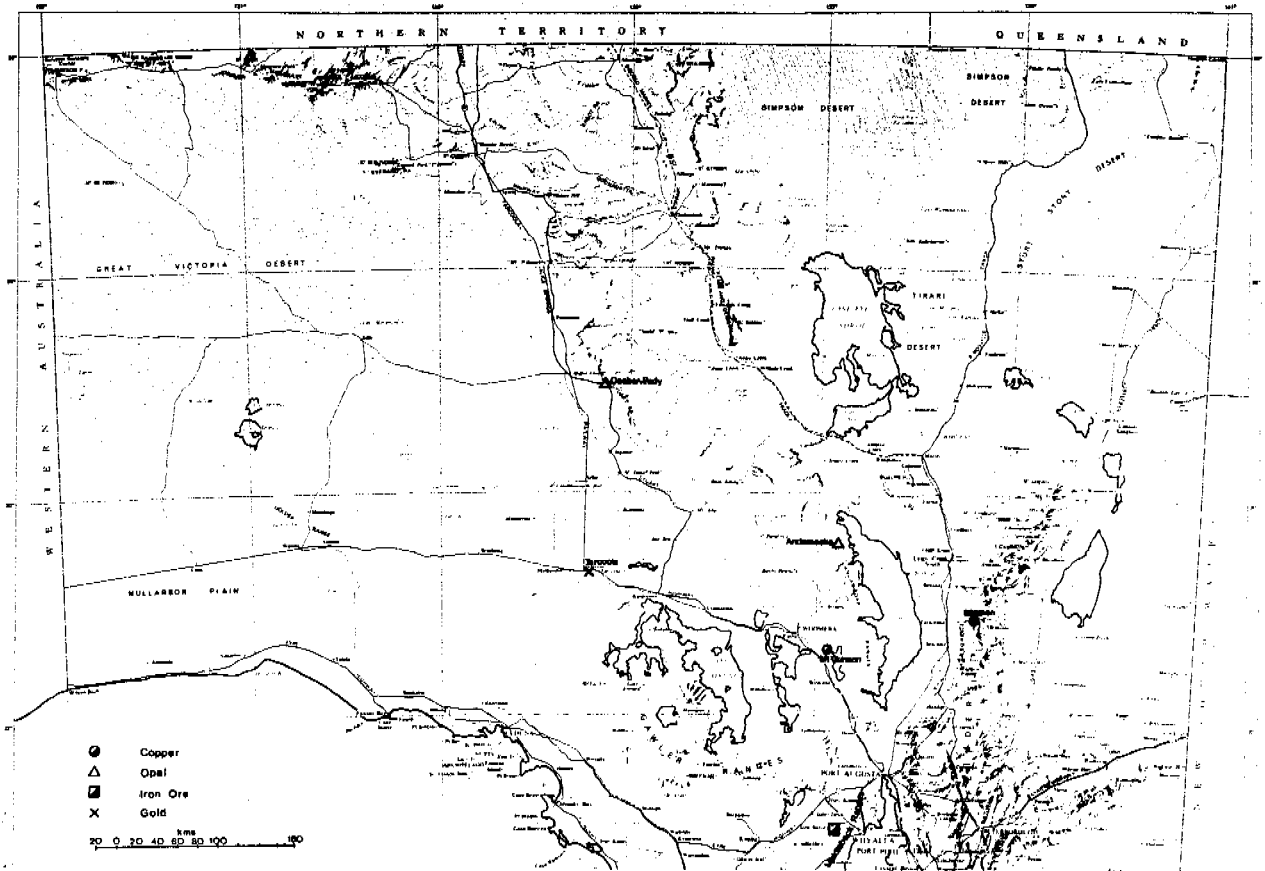


Port Augusta and submitted regular reports detailing the Aboriginal population of their areas.

The early European penetration into the north was also accompanied by the discovery and development of many mineral reserves. Most of this early activity was of a small scale as mining was hampered by the difficulties of transport in these remote areas. The Flinders Ranges area was rapidly inundated with miners and a variety of small ventures were established. The most productive of these early mining ventures was the copper mine at Blinman which was established in 1859 (Ludbrook, 1980; 160). In the area to the north-west of Port Augusta the major early developments included the opal mining at Coober Pedy and Andamooka (1915 and 1930 respectively), the gold mining at Tarcoola (1886), and the iron ore deposit at Middleback Ranges which was worked from 1899 onwards (Map 4:4).

In 1912 the role of Port Augusta as a transport centre for the northern part of the State was extended by the decision to construct the Trans Australian Railway which would link Port Augusta with the west and, eventually, the east of the country. The important transport role the Trans Australian (or East-West) line offered Port Augusta has had a lasting impact on the town. Even when the port facilities of the town closed in 1974 it was able to maintain its position as a transport centre for the north of the State through its important role as a railway centre. (The Iron Triangle Study Group, 1982; 22).

MAP 4:4 Early Mining Ventures in the Study Area.



4.2 A CONTEMPORARY REGIONAL DESCRIPTION

Port Augusta is one of three large town centres situated on the upper reaches of Spencer Gulf. Whyalla, Port Augusta and Port Pirie are the second, fourth and fifth largest urban centres by population, in the State, respectively and constitute the area called the Iron Triangle (Map 4:5). Each of these towns is dependent upon the processing of mineral ores, and has its livelihood inextricably linked to mineral developments in the region. Port Augusta also remains dependent upon the pastoral industry it originally serviced.

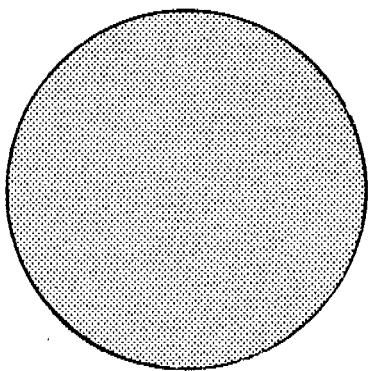
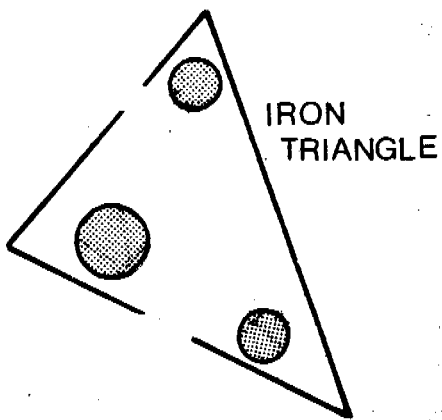
4.2.1 Pastoralism

Pastoralism covers the majority of the north and west of South Australia and is an established and stable land use although the industry's productivity and employment capacity fluctuate with seasonal variations (Map 4:6). At the time of my field research (1981) the industry was suffering the effects of lengthy and severe drought conditions and was in a generally depressed state. In that same year moves were being made to review the Pastoral Act with an aim to recommend statutory or administrative amendments ostensibly to facilitate a more effective administration of the land tenure system.

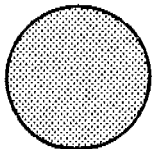
The push for the pastoral industry review came from two distinct interest groups, the pastoralists themselves and the conservationist lobby. The conservationist lobby was concerned with the degradation of arid lands through overstocking and the reluctance of the Pastoral Board to exercise its power to police and act in cases where land

MAP 4:5 Iron Triangle area showing Relative Population of Towns.

SOURCE: ABS (1982), Persons and Dwellings in Local Government Areas and Urban Centres, S.A., Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra.



880,000



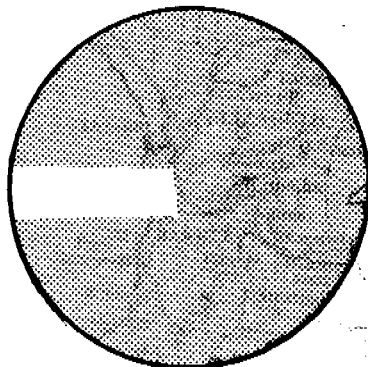
150,000



35,000

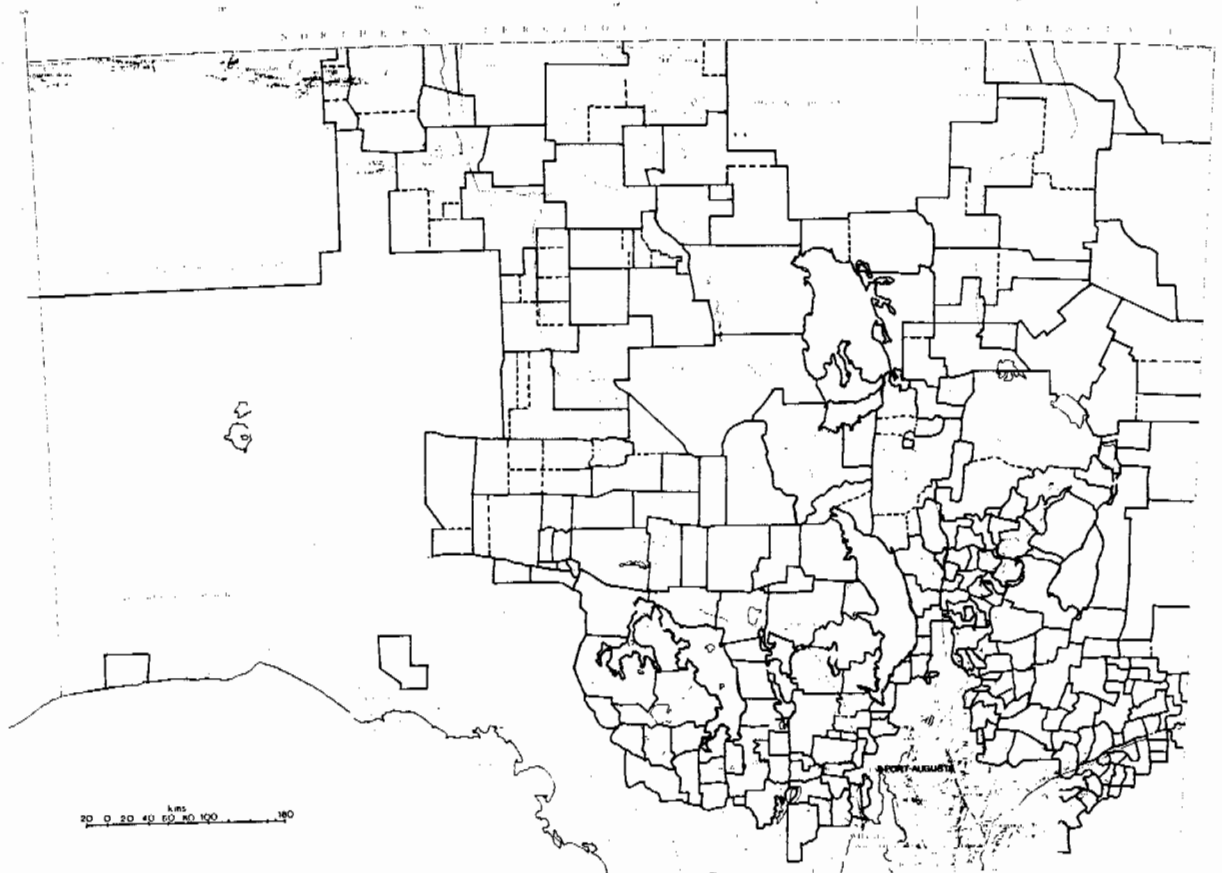


10,000



MAP 4:6 Areas under Pastoral Use in South Australia.

SOURCE: Department of Lands South Australia, South Australia showing Land Utilization and Pastoral Runs. Government Printer, Adelaide.



misuse had occurred. The conservationists wanted stricter compliance to stocking levels, more frequent reviews of the land and more severe punishments for breaches of the lease covenants. In opposition to this stood the pastoral lobby. The main concern of this group was not so much the condition of the land but their security of tenure. Their existing form of tenure was a forty-two year pastoral lease offering the right of renewal in the thirty-fifth year of the term. According to the Pastoral Act (1936-1980) lease renewal was subject to a review of the condition of the lease. However, the power to deny renewal due to misuse of the land was rarely exercised despite obvious cases of land degradation. The pastoral lobby was motivated by new pressures on the arid regions which they saw as having the potential to erode their security of tenure. The Committee established to review the Pastoral Act isolated the pressures as being those arising from increased mining and tourism and, particularly, changing attitudes towards traditional Aboriginals and the resultant Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act (Department of Lands, 1981; 1.1).

The report of the Review Committee reflect the divergent interests of the pastoralists and the conservationists (Department of Lands, 1981). The Committee consisted of five members, two of whom were more sympathetic to the conservationist view and a three member majority who were representative of the pastoralists' lobby for greater security of tenure. The two member minority suggested the retention of a forty-two year lease but accommodated the

demand for increased security of tenure by allowing renewal during any of the last twenty-one years of the lease term. The same minority also suggested more regular reviews of covenant adherence. In contrast, the majority group suggested the introduction of a continuous lease system subject to covenant review every fourteen years. In essence they were suggesting the introduction of a perpetual lease system. The resulting Bill, entitled 'A Bill for an Act to amend the Pastoral Act, 1936-1980 (1982)', in fact ignored the differing opinions of the members of the Review Committee and provided for the introduction of perpetual leases. Under this proposed system, provisions were made for the land to be reviewed for covenant adherence but the worst that could happen to a lessee breaching the covenants was conversion of the perpetual lease to a twenty-one year terminating lease, and reassessment at the end of this time.

In relation to Aboriginal interests in the area the Bill did not detract from their existing right, as stated in the pastoral lease document but not the Act itself, of free access to pastoral lands. However, the increased security of tenure offered by the introduction of a perpetual lease system meant that land would be locked into the tenureship of existing lessees giving little opportunity for new groups, such as Aboriginal communities, to enter into the land system. Further, a perpetual lease system would greatly increase the value of the land to a lessee and thus result in greater compensation costs for the Government if resuming the land for use by Aboriginal groups..

For those Aboriginal groups relying on the land acquisition services offered by the ADC, a change to the perpetual lease system would seriously hinder their entry into the pastoral lease market.

The Bill was defeated in its second reading before the Legislative Assembly in June of 1982 by the casting vote of the Democrat member. The change to a Labor Government, traditionally less sympathetic to the pastoral lobby, later in the same year has, for the moment, ensured that the pastoral system in South Australia does not convert to a perpetual lease system. The pastoralist bid to obtain greater security of tenure was spurred, to some extent, by increasing minority interests in the pastoral lands. The reluctance of the powerful pastoral lobby to accommodate these divergent minority interests, particularly the Aboriginal interest, remains an obstacle to the recognition of Aboriginal interests in land in prime pastoral areas such as the region under consideration. Further, the failure of any of the participating interest groups to induce amendments to the Pastoral Act has meant that the small concession to the Aboriginal population currently offered by the lease covenants of free access to pastoral lands remains simply a condition of the lease document rather than a legislated right.

4.2.2 Mining

The first large-scale mining operation in this region was the extraction of iron ore from the Middleback Ranges. Although the Middleback Ranges had been worked since 1899

by BHP and its operations were expanded in 1915, it was not until 1935 that iron ore was extracted on a large scale. In 1935 BHP not only extended its mining activities in the Middlebacks, it also increased the amount of ore going to the Port Pirie lead smelter and established a steel and ship building works at Whyalla (Ludbrook, 1980).

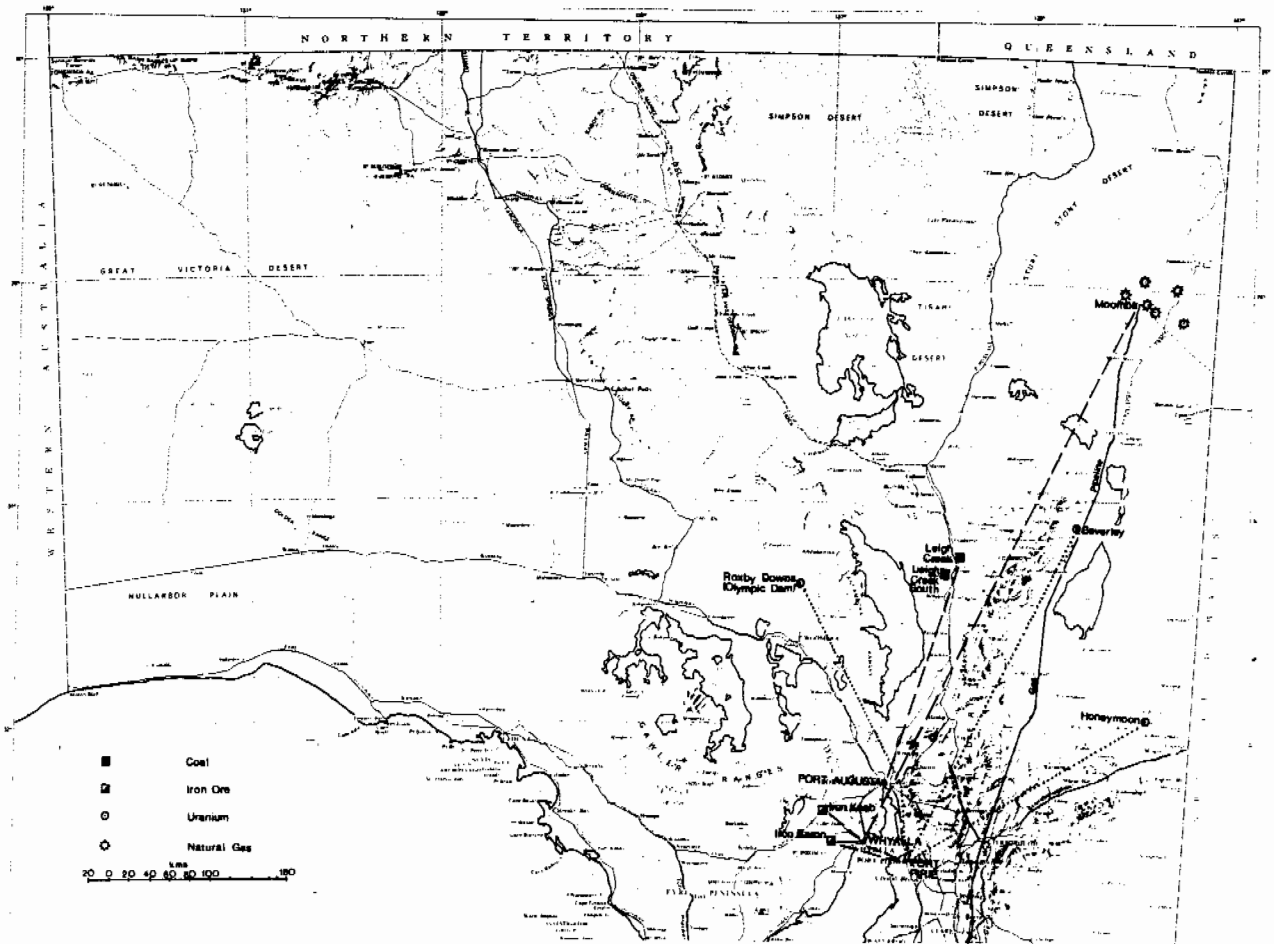
This type of development involving the co-existence of the mining and processing of mineral resources was repeated in the Leigh Creek mining venture. Although the Leigh Creek Coalfields had been worked since 1894 it was not until the Government took over its operation in 1943 that large scale development occurred. When the Electricity Trust of South Australia (ETSA) began participating in its development in 1948 it resulted in a repetition of the type of multi-faceted development that occurred in relation to the Middleback Ranges. The Leigh Creek Coalfields became an integral link in ETSA's role of providing power to the State. A closed town was constructed near the coalfields to house the miners and to provide ancillary services. The coal mined was transported to Port Augusta where it provided the fuel for the newly constructed power plant. The Leigh Creek development has remained one of the largest developments in the north of the State. In 1980 mining was extended to a new coal seam lying underneath the original town and a new town was built further south. Similarly the power production side of the development has been upgraded and extended by the construction of a new power plant at Port Augusta.

During the last decade increasing emphasis has been

placed upon the development of mineral resources by both the State and Federal Governments. This has resulted in a number of new developments and development proposals, of a similar scale to Leigh Creek and the Middleback Ranges, in the study area. Most of these new and proposed developments include massive mining operations, the building of mining towns, and linkages to one of the larger regional centres in the Iron Triangle where the raw materials are processed and/or shipped (Map 4:7). As yet, only the Cooper Basin Liquids Scheme is beyond the exploratory stages. The Cooper Basin Scheme entails the extraction of Liquefied Petroleum Gas and crude oil from the Basin and piping it to the specially constructed Stony Point separation and shipping facilities. The pipeline follows a 659 kilometre route from the Basin, through the Flinders Ranges to the Stony Point facility which is capable of receiving and fractionating up to 45,000 barrels of hydrocarbon liquid each day. Stony Point has storage facilities for the incoming raw liquids, distillation columns for the separation procedure and purification plant for the LPG, product storage tanks and a 2.4 kilometre jetty capable of handling vessels up to 70,000 dead weight tonnes (The Iron Triangle Study Group, 1982; 138). Stony Point is also under consideration as a site for a petrochemical plant. The Cooper Basin Scheme, like most large-scale mining ventures, is operated by a consortium of companies (Appendix VII).

A number of similar large-scale developments are currently at the feasibility and exploratory stage in this

MAP 4:7 Current and Proposed Mining Developments in Study Area showing Linkages to Iron Triangle Towns.



region of the State. The Roxby Downs Development is by far the most substantial of these proposed mining ventures. Exploratory drilling in 1975 resulted in the discovery of an extensive copper, gold and uranium mineralisation at Olympic Dam on the Roxby Downs pastoral lease. Since discovery further drilling has established the extent of the mineralisation and already the find is being viewed as 'a major new mineral province...in South Australia' (The Iron Triangle Study Group, 1982; 145). The development of Roxby Downs is a joint venture involving Western Mining Corporation Limited and BP Australia Limited. The expected yield of the development is estimated to be, at minimum, 3.6 million tonnes of ore/annum and, in full production, 5.7 million tonnes/annum, a scale comparable to Mt. Isa in Queensland. It is expected that accompanying the development a town housing 5,000-7,000 people will be established by 1990, and already the exploratory stage has a temporary town of 200 people .

Uranium mining is also under consideration at Honeymoon and Beverly. The Honeymoon site is estimated to have reserves of 3 million tonnes (450 tonnes of yellowcake/year) and is being considered for development by MIM Holdings Limited, CSR Limited, and Teton Australia Limited. Beverly is potentially larger than Honeymoon with an estimated 6.6 million tonne reserve. Similarly Beverly is under exploration by a consortium of companies (see Appendix VII). It is proposed that both sites will be mined by a solution process which involves dissolving the mineralisation in situ with acidified ground water. Each of these three uranium-

producing ventures has the potential to be linked with a uranium conversion plant currently under consideration for Port Pirie.

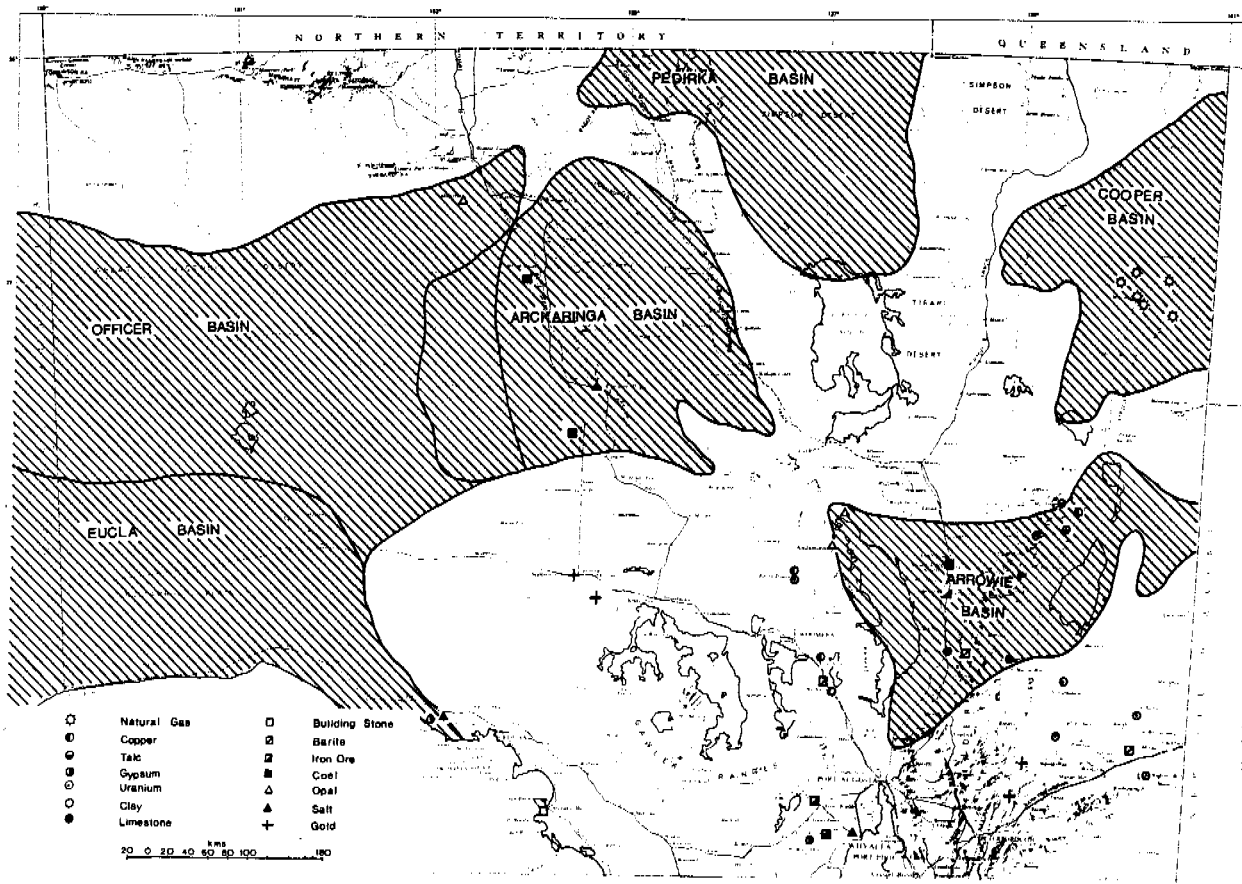
Map 4:8, which shows the extent of existing mineral development in the region as well as the sedimentary basin mineralisations currently under exploration, illustrates well the potential this region has for further mineral development. The developers entering this region consist of large consortiums with strong financial backing from both within Australia and overseas. Each major development may involve up to ten companies. (See Appendix VII).

The three main towns in the Iron Triangle, which are already linked to large-scale mineral developments in the region, are keen to secure additional links with new mining ventures. The recent Iron Triangle Study, which resulted from a joint Federal-State initiative, concluded that the future of Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Pirie depends upon the development of resource-based industries (Iron Triangle Study Group, 1982; preface). Currently these towns each have approximately 50% of their total workforce tied to one or two companies associated with resource development (Iron Triangle Study Group, 1982; 2). Their narrow industrial bases are placing considerable pressure on the towns to diversify and take advantage of the new phase of resource development.

The scale of development, the local, State and Federal support given to this type of development, and the magnitude of involvement by the private sector, have created major

MAP 4:8 Extent of Existing Mineral Developments in
Study Area and known Sedimentary Basin
Mineralisations.

SOURCE: Iron Triangle Study Group (1982), The Iron
Triangle Study pp 42 and 133. Government
Printer, Adelaide.



difficulties for the Adnjamathanha and Kokatha groups when declaring their often conflicting land interests. Any effort by an Aboriginal group to have their land interests recognised is pitted against the interests of the large multi-faceted, Government-supported developers. As later case studies will illustrate, the EIS procedure, which provides the main vehicle by which Aboriginal groups may have their land interests heard, is far from satisfactory and rarely deters large-scale developments.

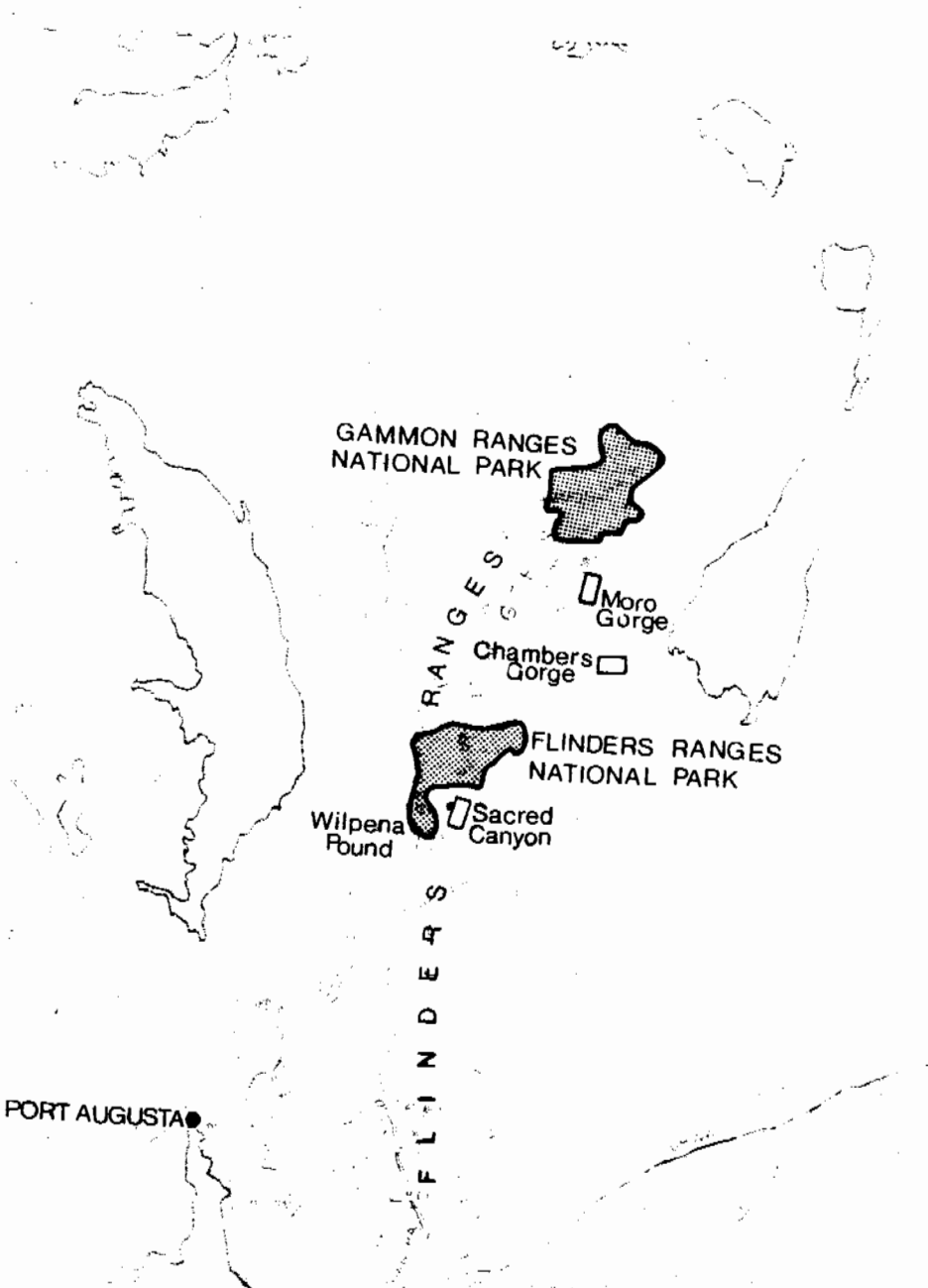
4.2.3 Tourism

In the Flinders Ranges section of the region under consideration, tourism emerges as another significant pressure upon the land. The change in tourist expectations and needs, incited by conservationist and naturalist philosophies gaining popular acceptance, has resulted in areas of natural beauty such as the Flinders Ranges becoming prime tourist destinations (Plate 4:1). The 1973 Development Plan for the Flinders Ranges states that the area is 'the most popular tourist destination for people living within the State and the third most popular destination in South Australia for visitors from other States' (State Planning Authority, 1973; 19). The establishment of extensive National and State parks which are equipped with a wide range of tourist facilities has further encouraged tourist inflow to the area (Map 4:9). The influx of tourists into the Flinders Ranges and the opening of public parks has had a significant impact on the Aboriginal population. Areas considered to be

PLATE 4:1 An Area of Natural Beauty in the Flinders
Ranges, a prime South Australian Tourist
Area.



MAP 4:9 National Park Areas in the Flinders Ranges and
three main tourist destinations at which
Aboriginal art sites are located.



GAMMON RANGES
NATIONAL PARK

RANGES

Moro
Gorge

Chambers
Gorge

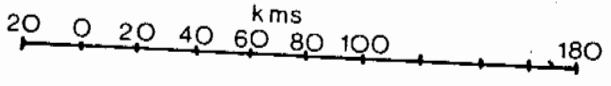
FLINDERS RANGES
NATIONAL PARK

Wilpena
Pound

Sacred
Canyon

FLINDERS

PORT AUGUSTA



culturally important by the Adnjamathanha people, and which were previously on land owned by pastoralists and not open to public access, have been transformed into major tourist spots. This is particularly the case with extensive rock painting and engraving sites such as Moro Gorge and Chambers Gorge and with the mythological site of Wilpena Pound. Wilpena Pound is now a major tourist centre in the Flinders Ranges equipped with both camping and hotel facilities. Many of the rock engraving and painting sites in the Flinders Ranges have suffered badly from the penetration of tourists and graffiti is commonly found on many of the galleries (Plate 4:2). It was this type of tourist pressure which encouraged the Heritage Unit to direct their site recording energies toward the Flinders Ranges. The majority of art sites are now recorded and offered protection under the Heritage Act. The defacing of sites carries with it a fine, however, the remoteness of the sites prevents adequate policing measures and enforcement of the fines. A recent measure to deter vandalism has been the erection of signs stating that the sites are 'Aboriginal Sites' and protected by law (Plate 4:3).

4.2.4 Conclusion

The regional setting of my study is characterised by diverse and large-scale pressures upon the land. Although the region under consideration is physically extensive the number of interest groups vying for use or control of the land is considerable. The Aboriginal minority pit their land aspirations against the stronger ambitions

PLATE 4:2 An example of Graffiti on an Aboriginal art site in the Flinders Ranges.

PLATE 4:3 An Aboriginal Rock Art Gallery in the Flinders Ranges with a sign erected by the Heritage Unit (to the right).



of corporate groups supported by Local, State and Federal Governments wishing to benefit from mining, pastoral and tourist development. The chance of an Aboriginal group successfully competing against the multifaceted corporate bodies or the status quo pastoral lobby for control of the land is minimal. Within this environment the land becomes a scarce resource for Aboriginal groups. This factor, combined with the legislative limitations faced by Aboriginals seeking land, makes the opportunities of having their land ambitions recognised minimal.

4.3 THE CONTEMPORARY PORT AUGUSTA SETTING: AN ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVE

4.3.1 Introduction to the Aboriginal Community of Port Augusta

The location of Port Augusta township has long been used as a 'meeting place' for local Aboriginal groups. The area around Yorkies Crossing and Lake Umewarra to the north of the town has important mythological content and according to some of the older Aboriginals in the area was an important ceremonial site.

The establishment of Port Augusta as a regional town centre in 1854 encouraged the movement of Aboriginal groups into the area on a more permanent basis. The Sub-Protectors often brought Aboriginals who had allegedly committed crimes to Port Augusta to stand trial. The Sub-Protectors also encouraged Aboriginal women in remote areas to travel to Port Augusta so that their children could be born within close proximity of medical services. Port Augusta became an important place of European contact for the local Aboriginal

groups and, like any other centre, provided rations and other European goods. The construction of the East-West Railway line (1912-1917) encouraged many of the Aborigines to the north-west of Port Augusta to follow the line into the town where the spoils of European settlement such as food and alcohol were readily available.

In the 1930s Port Augusta provided specialised services for Aboriginal people in the town through the Brethren Mission. The Umeewarra Mission and Children's Home provided a focal point for the Aboriginal population of Port Augusta which at this stage was still transient, moving in and out of the town frequently. In the 1950s the State DAA (now subsumed under the Department for Community Welfare) appointed social workers to deal with the increasingly permanent Aboriginal population of Port Augusta. The implementation of the assimilation policy during the 1950s, and the consequent provision of housing for Aboriginal families wishing to reside within European settlements, further encouraged the movement of a permanent Aboriginal population to the town. Today Port Augusta operates as an important regional service centre for the Aboriginal population and provides a wide range of specialised Government services. This has further encouraged a movement into the town of Aborigines desiring to be in close proximity to the agencies providing these services.

This brief account of Aboriginal movement into Port Augusta is elaborated upon in relation to the Kokatha and Adnjamathanha groups in the following chapter; however, even

at this general level of explanation, the migratory nature of Port Augusta's Aboriginal population is clear (Map 4:10). Today the town is populated by Aboriginals from a variety of areas throughout the State. The Kokatha and Andnjamathanha are the dominant groups in the town but Aboriginals from the Dieri, Andigirinja, Luridja, Narrunga, Ngarndjeri, Arunda, Arabuna, Pitjantjatjara, Yankuntjatjara, Pangkalla and Wirungu groups are also present (Anderson, 1981; 39 and Field Work Survey, 1981). These groups originate from and identify with areas outside the Port Augusta township including Yalata, Coober Pedy, Oodnadatta, Indulkana, Finke, the North-West Reserve, Nepabunna, Ceduna, Koonibba, Alice Springs, Point Pearce and Point McLeay.

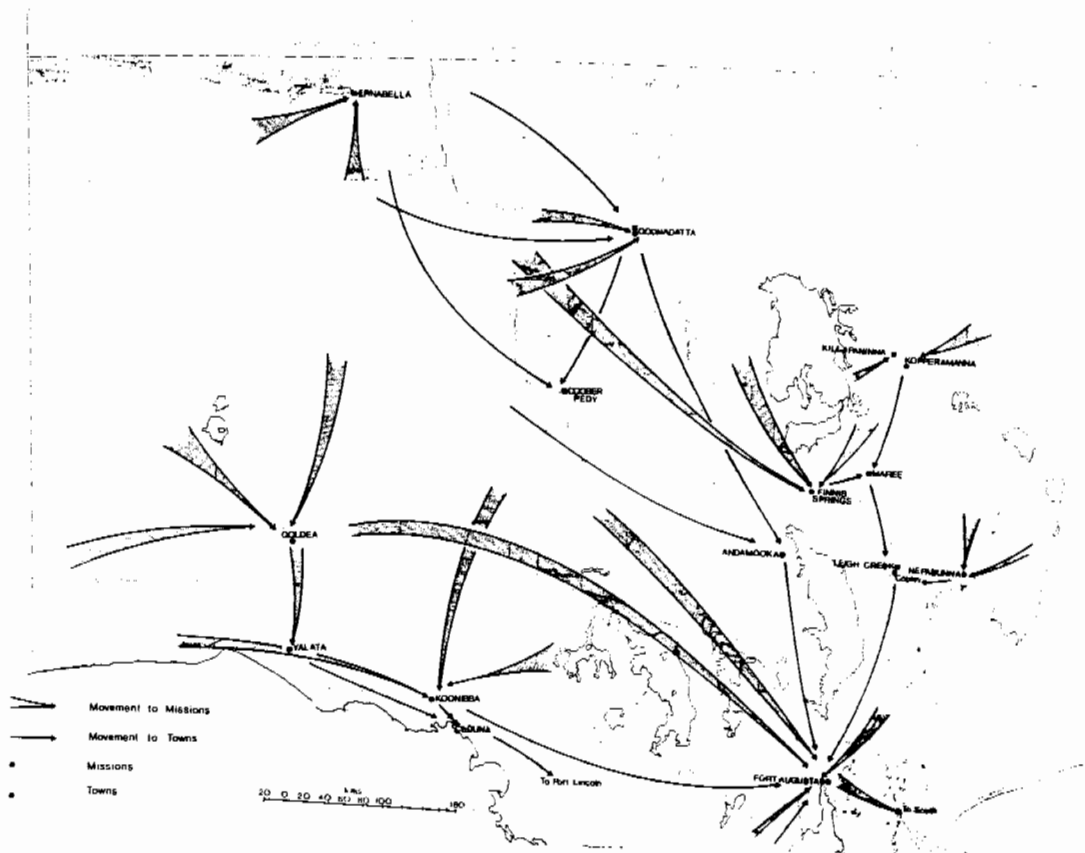
4.3.2 Demographic Structure of the Aboriginal Population of Port Augusta

Statistical data on Australia's Aboriginal population are far from comprehensive or adequate and figures available for Port Augusta are no exception. The main difficulty with most of the available data is under-enumeration resulting from questionnaire inadequacies and the inappropriateness of current statistical collection procedures to gauge correctly the highly mobile Aboriginal population. Any demographic analysis of the Aboriginal population of Port Augusta has these inbuilt inaccuracies.

According to the 1981 Census figures the current Aboriginal population of Port Augusta is 1,139 (ABS Census of Population & Housing, 1981). This constitutes 11.6% of the State's total Aboriginal population (9,826) and makes

MAP 4:10 Map of Aboriginal Migration Patterns in the North of the State.

SOURCE: Gale, F. (1960), A Study of Assimilation,
(Ph.D. Thesis, University of Adelaide)



Port Augusta the second largest Aboriginal community in South Australia after Adelaide. Thus, it is the largest Aboriginal community in the north of the State (Map 4:11).

The 1981 census estimates of the Aboriginal population in Port Augusta do not alter dramatically from other estimates for the same period. For example, an Aboriginal Housing Board Research Team, relying on figures available in the Project 90 Survey, AHB Surveys, and the 1976 Population Census, estimated the 1980 Aboriginal population of the town to be 1,100, 7.6% of the town's total population (Braddock & Wanganeen, 1980; 80). The 1981 Census figures suggest that the Aboriginal population constitutes 7.3% of the town's total population. Figures 4:1 and 4:2 present age pyramids of the Port Augusta total population and Aboriginal population. The age pyramid for the Aboriginal population, compared with that of the total population, reveals a large percentage of dependent Aboriginals (those in the age groups of 0-14 years and 60 years and over). In fact the dependency ratio for the Aboriginal population is 89.3:100 while the dependency ratio of the total population is only 63.1:100. That is, for every 100 independents there are 89.3 and 63.1 dependents respectively (ABS, 1981 Census of Population and Housing). The relative severity of the Aboriginal dependency ratio is exacerbated when considered in the light of the employment analysis of the Aboriginal population which follows. My analysis of Aboriginal employment reveals that a large proportion of the Aboriginal population of Port Augusta is

MAP 4:11 Major Aboriginal Population Centres for South
Australia.

SOURCE: ABS, 1981, Census of Population and Housing.

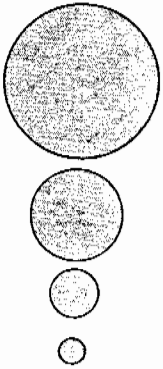
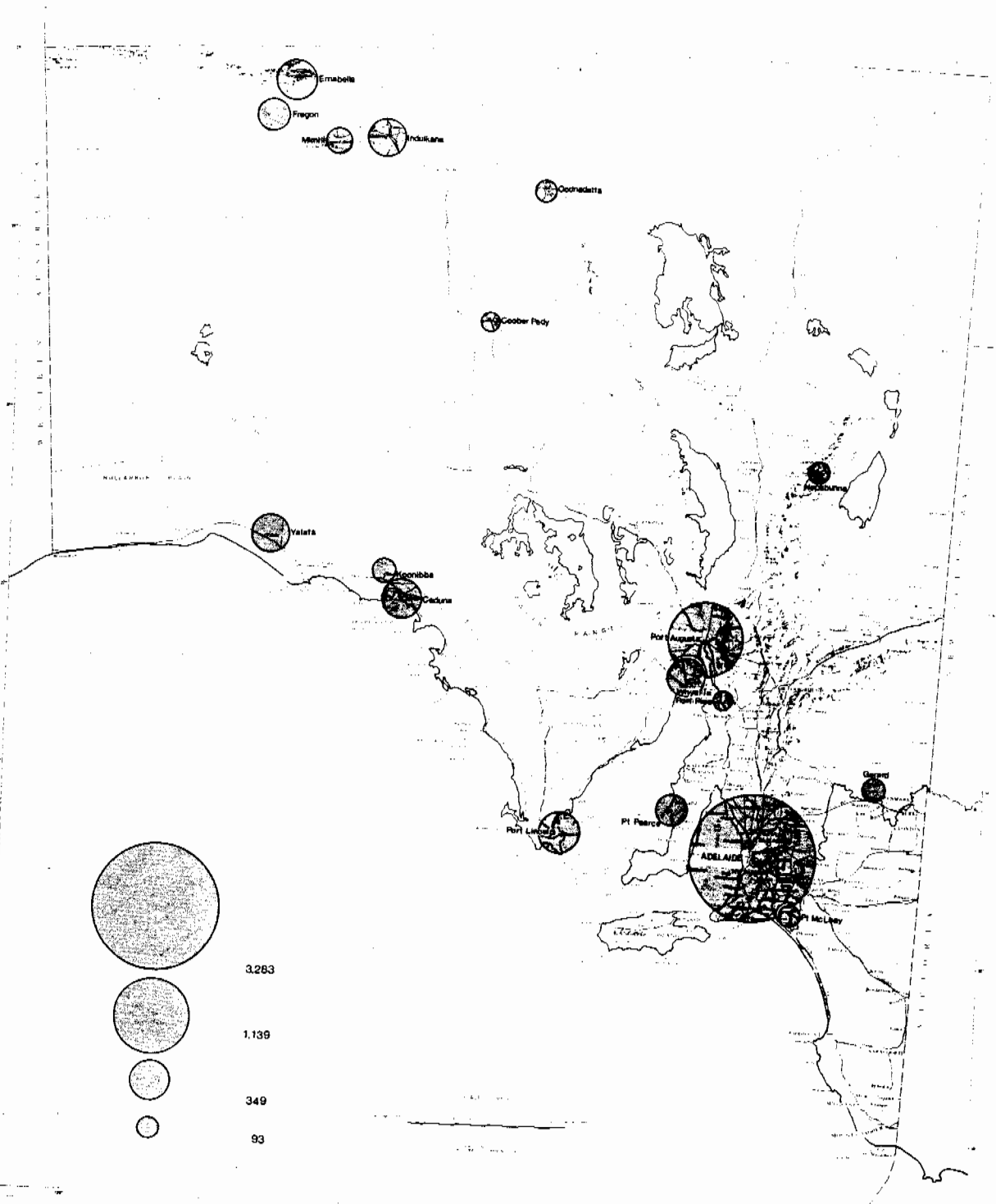
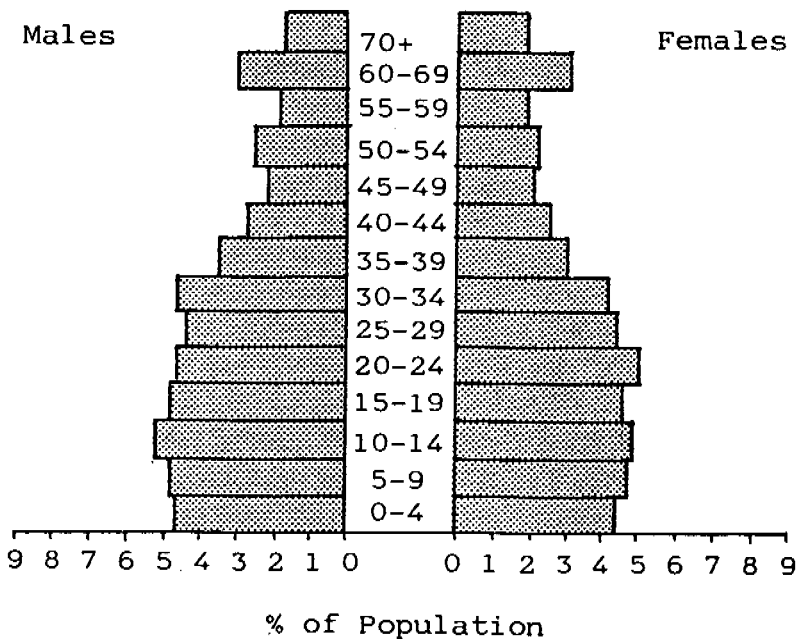
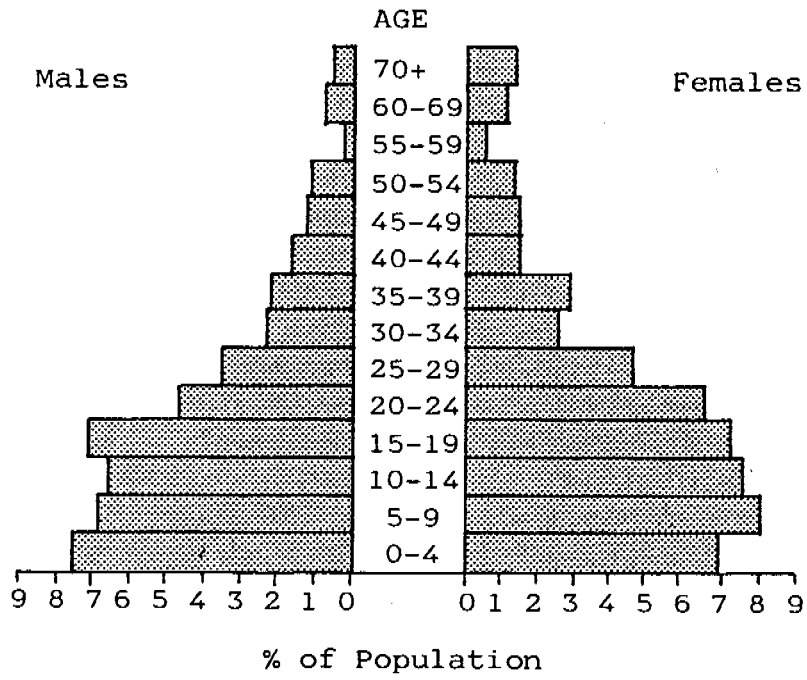


FIGURE 4:1 Age Pyramid of Aboriginal Population, Port Augusta.

FIGURE 4:2 Age Pyramid of Total Population, Port Augusta.

SOURCE: ABS, 1981, Census of Population and Housing.



unemployed and presumably dependent upon social security benefits. Thus, the Aboriginal population of Port Augusta is characterised by its high proportion of dependents (by age) who rely upon the remainder of the Aboriginal population of which a large proportion is dependent upon the Government.

4.3.3 Housing Patterns of the Aboriginal Community of Port Augusta

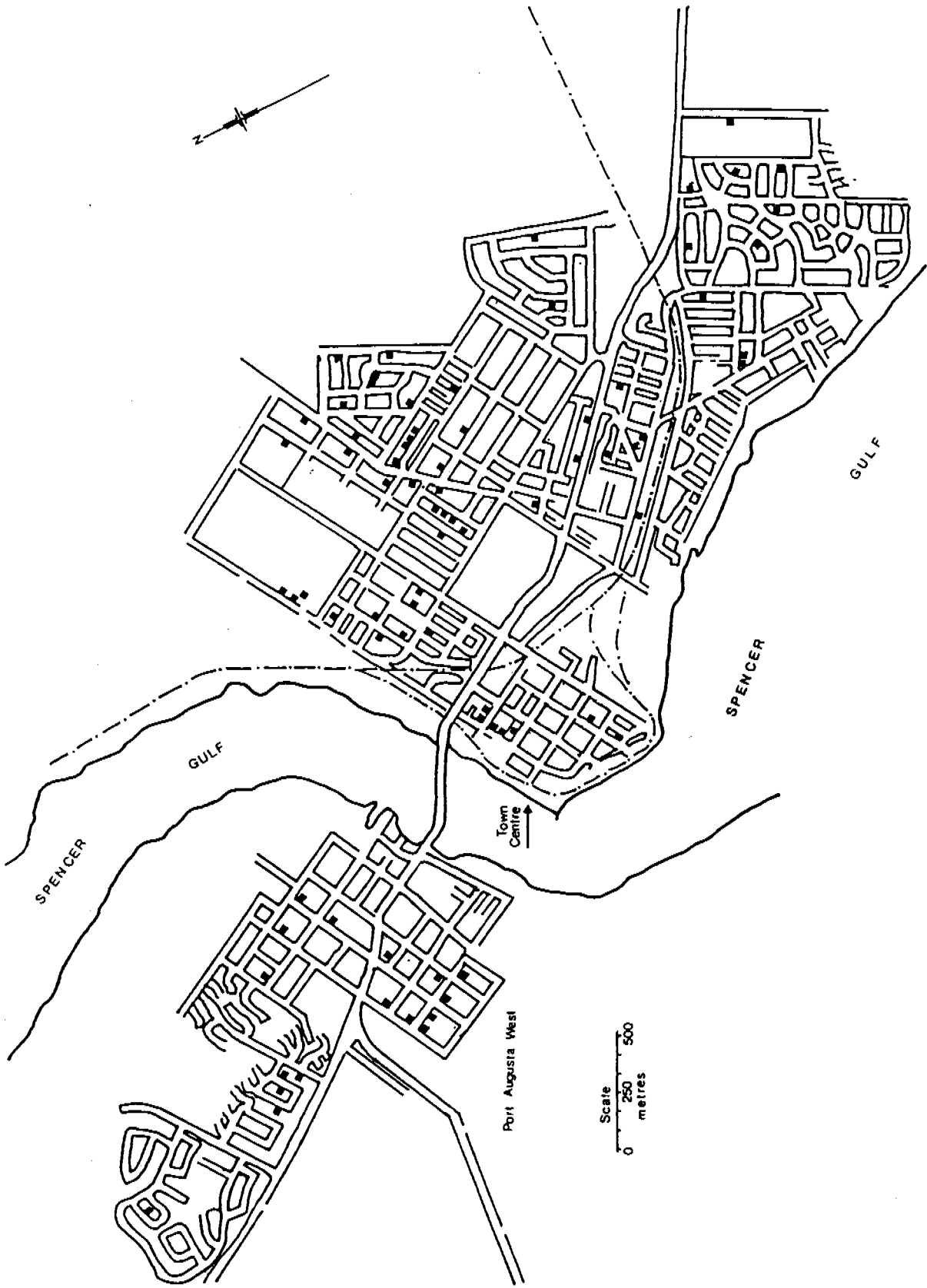
The Aboriginal population of Port Augusta lives in three distinct areas in the town including the township itself, Bangalla Estate and Davenport Reserve. Firstly, those families living within the town itself usually occupy houses provided by the South Australian Housing Trust or Aboriginal Funded Housing. Also some families live in houses provided by the Australian National Railways or in private market houses (Table 4:1). The Table reveals that the main source of housing for Aboriginal families living in the township is Aboriginal Funded Housing. Map 4:12 shows the location of houses in Port Augusta known to be occupied by Aboriginals in 1981. It reveals that the housing is evenly spread throughout the town, avoiding large congregations of houses occupied by Aboriginal families. The number of Aboriginal households in the Port Augusta township has increased dramatically over the last twenty years. In 1957 no Aboriginals occupied houses located within the town (pers.com. F. Gale). In 1964 only sixteen houses were known to be occupied by Aboriginal families (Gordon, 1964; unpublished field notes). The recent increase shown by current figures is a direct result of the Federal

TABLE 4:1 HOUSING SOURCES FOR ABORIGINAL OCCUPIED
HOUSES IN PORT AUGUSTA TOWNSHIP, 1980

Housing Source	Number occupied by Aboriginal families	Total housing stock
Aboriginal Funded Housing	76	76 + on-going building purchasing
SAHT	40	1400 on-going building
ANR	6	300
Private Market	10-12	2500
TOTAL	132-134	4276

Source: Braddock, M. and Wanganeen, M. (1980) Housing
Summary. S.A. Aboriginal Housing Board
Research Team, p.17.

MAP 4:12 Plan of Port Augusta showing location of Houses occupied
by Aboriginal families, 1981.



SPENCER

GULF

GULF

SPENCER

Town Centre

Port Augusta West

Scale
0 250 500
metres

Government placing greater emphasis on programmes that provide town-located housing (Rowley, 1971a; 259).

The second area of Aboriginal residence in Port Augusta is Bangalla Estate, located between Port Augusta township and Davenport Aboriginal Reserve. Plans for Bangalla housing estate were instigated in the early 1970s by the first Aboriginal manager of Davenport Aboriginal Reserve, and the project was funded by DAA. It was planned as an alternative living environment for those not wishing to live on Davenport Reserve or within the actual town of Port Augusta. The original plan was for a fifty-five house estate with a community centre and oval. After the first phase of development, work on the project ceased. Today only fourteen houses accommodate the thirty-three residents of the Estate and all plans for further development of the Estate have waned (Plate 4:4).

The third residential alternative for the Port Augusta Aboriginal population is Davenport Reserve. Davenport is viewed by most townspeople, Aboriginals included, as a typical Aboriginal fringe-camp. It is characterised by poor quality housing, further degenerated by the rough treatment offered by residents. Shaw Street is the case example of the quality of the housing at Davenport Reserve (Plate 4:5), although better quality housing is available (Plate 4:6). The housing in Shaw Street is not used regularly, rather, it is used spasmodically by the transient Aboriginal population which camps in the sandhills around the Reserve. The better quality housing is used by a

PLATE 4:4 View of Bangalla Housing Estate.



PLATE 4:5 Poor Quality Housing located in Shaw Street,
Davenport Reserve.

PLATE 4:6 Better Quality Housing on Davenport Reserve.



handful of permanent Davenport residents. It is estimated that the population fluctuates between two hundred and four hundred people (pers. com. DAA Field Officer, 1981). Of the twenty-two dwellings at Davenport eleven were occupied by long-term residents in 1981. These families have the opportunity to live in either Bangalla Estate or the town, but prefer the Reserve environment where the pressures to conform to white standards of living are significantly less (cf. Collmann, 1979).

There is only one man living outside these three alternatives. His small camp, in sandhills on the outskirts of town, is tolerated by the owner of the land although the land is now on the market and his security threatened (Plates 4:7 and 4:8).

4.3.4 Aboriginal Employment in Port Augusta

As with the figures on Aboriginal population, few precise statistics are available on Aboriginal employment in Port Augusta. The only recent and detailed analysis of this feature of Port Augusta's Aboriginal community is a DCW study of Aboriginal unemployment in Port Augusta (Powell, 1978). Although three years out-of-date in relation to my 1981 field work, the data available from this study are satisfactory indicators of the pattern of Aboriginal employment and unemployment in Port Augusta.

As with other research detailing Aboriginal unemployment (see, for example, Gale and Wundersitz, 1982), the Powell report found the unemployment rate for Aboriginals in Port Augusta to be considerably higher than

PLATE 4:7 The Isolated Aboriginal Camp on the fringe of
Port Augusta.

PLATE 4:8 The land on which this camp is located is soon
to be sold.



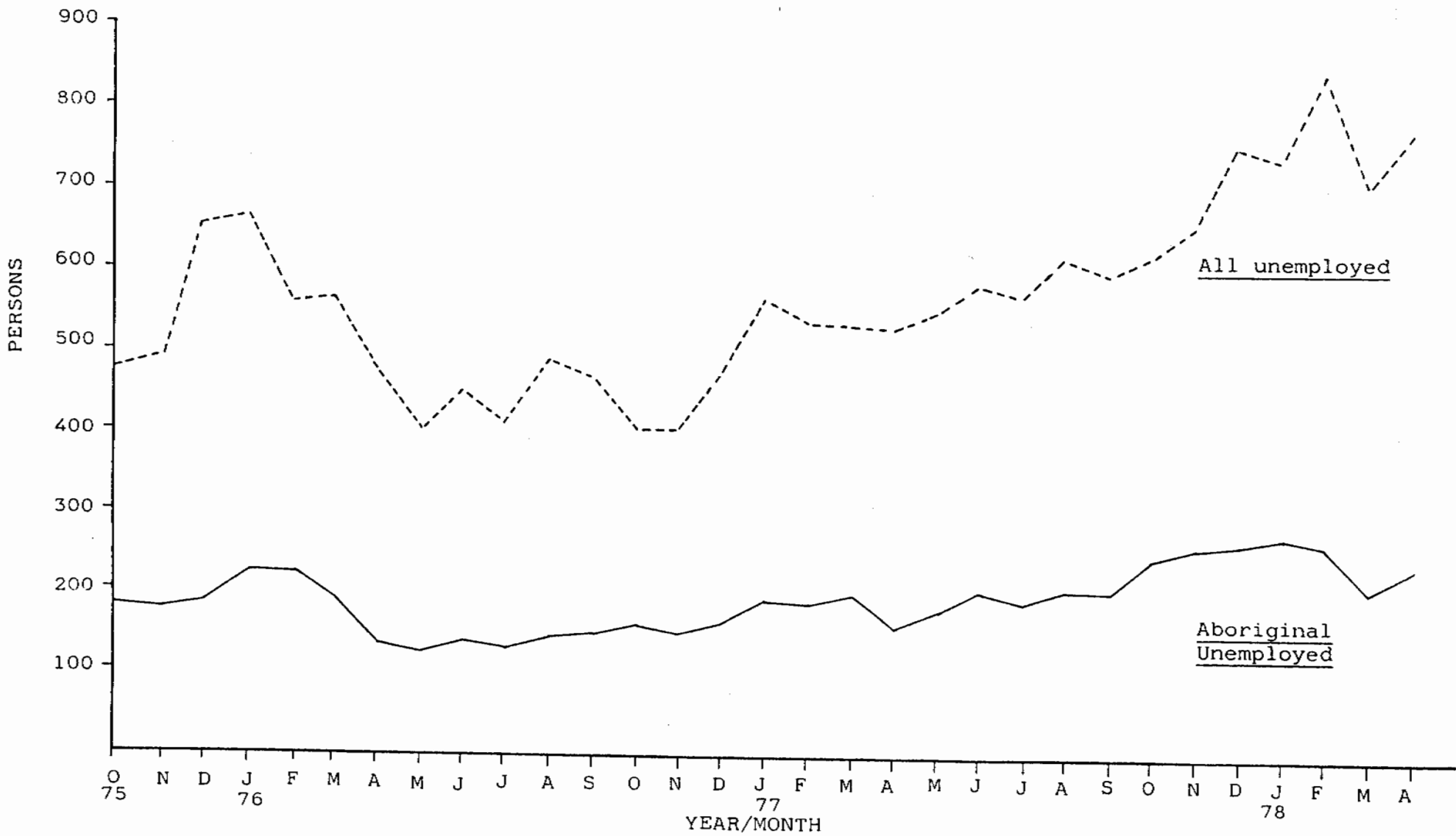
that of the non-Aboriginal population. The Aboriginal population, which Powell estimated to be approximately 8% of the town's total population, constituted a fairly constant one third of the town's unemployed (Figure 4:3).

His survey further established that the Aboriginal unemployment rate for Port Augusta was 55% compared to an average for the State's total population at the time of 6.9% (Powell, 1978; 20). The high unemployment rate was partly related to both real and perceived employer views of Aboriginal people as unsuitable employees. Additionally, the general decline in employment opportunities in the region, particularly in traditional areas of Aboriginal employment such as pastoralism, compounded already abnormally high unemployment figures. The unemployment problem was not viewed by Powell as a temporary situation but as a more deeply entrenched condition arising out of a 'cycle that links menial jobs, low pay, lack of enthusiasm for work, absenteeism, and recurrent joblessness' (Powell, 1978; 30).

The Powell Report does not present a detailed analysis of Aboriginal employment in the town. Rather, it takes a general look at employment sources to assess their potential as Aboriginal work places. According to the Powell Report, the Electricity Trust of South Australia (ETSA), and the transport industry (Australian National Railways and to a lesser degree The Highways Department), employed the majority of Port Augusta's general workforce (Powell, 1978; 30). Similarly, they provided employment for a large number of male members of the Aboriginal work-

FIGURE 4:3 Aboriginal Unemployment as a Proportion of Total Registered Unemployment (Oct. 1975 - April 1978).

SOURCE: Powell, L. (1978), Aboriginal Employment Training Research Project. Department for Community Welfare, p. 15.



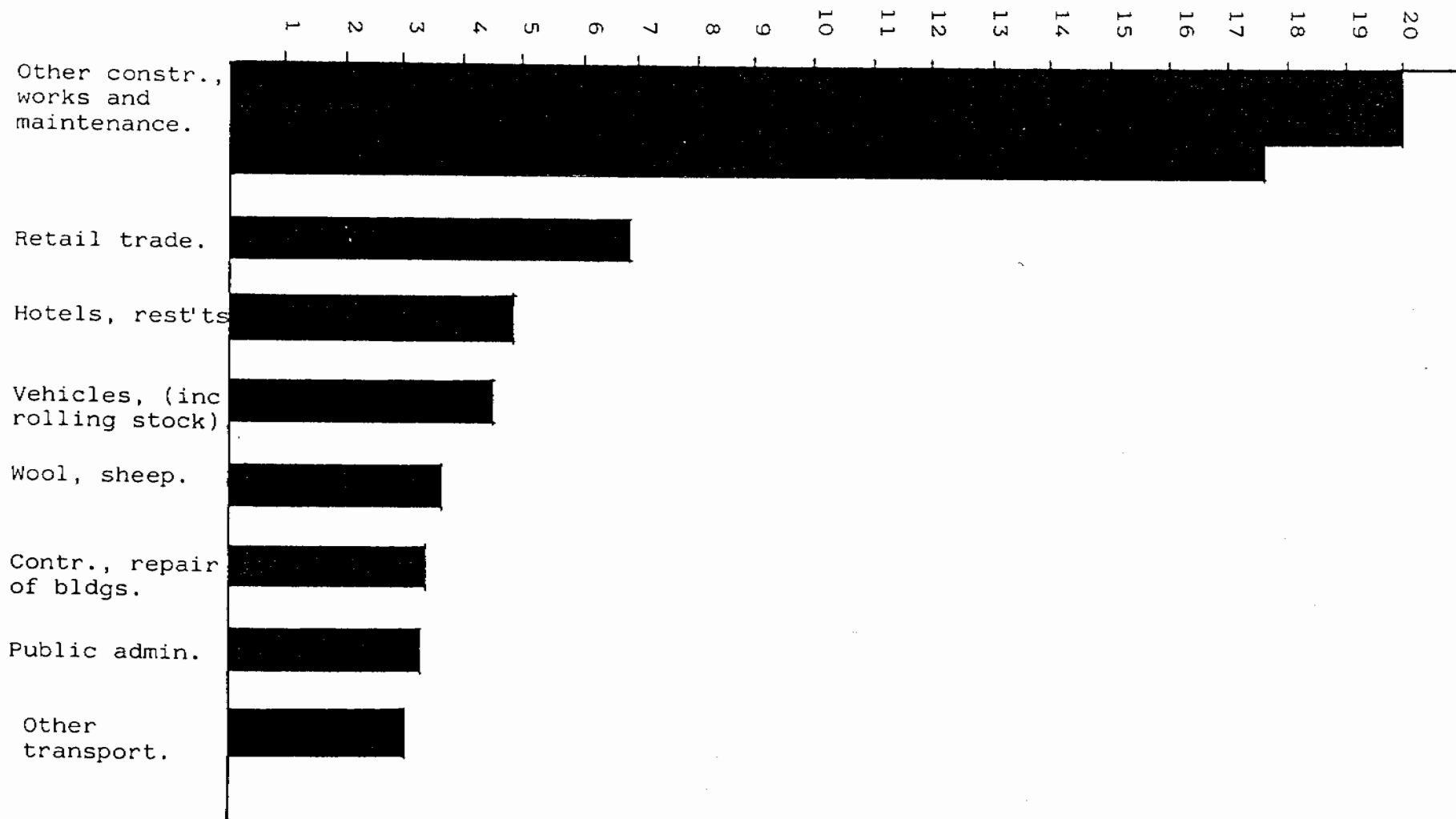
force. In contrast to the pattern of employment of the general population, by far the greatest amount of Aboriginal employment in Port Augusta was found to be in the community service field, specifically Aboriginal-related services. The Powell survey revealed that from a sample of 103 employed Aboriginals 49% had jobs in the 'open' employment market and 51% had jobs in the 'closed' market, that is, organisations or programmes dealing with Aboriginal services and where being an Aboriginal is an important job credential (Powell, 1978; 41). Considering the comparatively smaller employment capacity of the administration sector in Port Augusta, and particularly the specialised Aboriginal service sector, this is a startling bias towards 'closed' sector jobs (Figure 4:4).

In an attempt to up-date and produce a more detailed view of Aboriginal employment in Port Augusta I conducted a job survey as part of my field work in Port Augusta. The aim of this survey was to compile a fairly comprehensive Aboriginal job list, that is, a list of employed Aboriginal people, their type of job and employer (Appendix VIII). The total job list accounted for 132 employed Aboriginals and this figure does not contrast too significantly from Anderson's 1981 estimate of 150 employed Aboriginals (Anderson, 1981; no page) and the 1981 Census figure of 139 employed Aboriginals (ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 1981).

The broadest breakdown I have made of the job list data has been into Government/non-Government categories.

FIGURE 4:4 Principal new vacancies by industry as percentage of total new vacancies, Port Augusta, 1977.

SOURCE: Powell, L. (1978), Aboriginal Employment Training Research Project. Department for Community Welfare, p.24.



Included in the Government category are industries such as ETSA, ANR, the Hospital, Highways and Government community services. The proportion of Aboriginals employed in Government jobs is 90.2% of the total job list. This weighting towards Government employment not only reflects the dominance of Government services and industries as sources of employment in Port Augusta but also suggests that for Aboriginal people, employment is easier to secure with the Government than with private enterprise. Government subsidy and training programmes directed towards the Aboriginal workforce are adopted more frequently by other Government organisations and industries and helps to account for this employment bias. Further there is a significant percentage of Aboriginal workers employed in the 'closed' Government sector, that is services related to the Aboriginal community. A total of 56.1% of Aboriginals recorded in the job list work in the 'closed' sector, outweighing the 'open' sector total of 43.9% (Table 4:2).

The Powell Study (1978; 22) presented an employment hierarchy based on workforce participation for the total Port Augusta population. Powell's hierarchy was headed by the transport and storage industry (35.2% of workforce participation), followed by community services (12.9%), wholesale and retail trade (12.7%), and finally electricity (12.6%). Together they account for 73.4% of the total employed workforce. The Aboriginal employment hierarchy, according to my 1981 job list, is headed by closed sector

TABLE 4:2 COMPARISON OF CLOSED AND OPEN SECTOR
EMPLOYMENT AMONG ABORIGINALS IN PORT
AUGUSTA, 1981

Job Sector	Employer	% of Aboriginal Job List employed (N=132)
CLOSED SECTOR	Education Department	12.2% (N=16)
	Kindergarten Union	9.2% (N=12)
	Woma	6.1% (N=8)
	Davenport Council	4.5% (N=6)
	Community Affairs Panel	4.5% (N=6)
	Dept for Community Welfare	3.8% (N=5)
	Aboriginal Legal Rights	3.1% (N=4)
	Aboriginal Development Commission	2.3% (N=3)
	National Parks and Wildlife	1.5% (N=2)
	Pryti Yatha Sand Co.	1.5% (N=2)
	National Aboriginal Conference	1.5% (N=2)
	Department of Aboriginal Affairs	1.5% (N=2)
	S.A. Housing Trust	1.5% (N=2)
	Department of Further Education	0.75%(N=1)
	Department of Social Security	0.75%(N=1)
	Commonwealth Employment Service	0.75%(N=1)
	Offenders Aid R.S.	0.75%(N=1)
TOTAL	(N=17)	56.1% (N=74)
OPEN SECTOR	Australian National Rail	18.3% (N=24)
	ETSA	9.8% (N=13)
	Private enterprise (N=6)	5.3% (N=7)
	Pastoralists (N=6)	4.5% (N=6)
	EWS	2.3% (N=3)
	Highways	1.5% (N=2)
	Hospital	1.5% (N=2)
Local Government	0.75%(N=1)	
TOTAL	(N=18)	43.9% (N=58)
TOTAL	N=35	100% (N=132)

Source: Field Work Survey, 1981.

community services (56.1%), transport (18.3%), electricity 9.8%) and finally wholesale and retail trade 5.3%). Together these account for 89.5% of the employed Aboriginal workforce. The employment hierarchy indicated by my survey compares well with the 1976 census figures on Aboriginal employment by industry. The census breakdown of Aboriginal employment, although using slightly different categories, also shows that the majority of Aboriginal employment is in the community service field (30.9%).

The significant lack of Aboriginal participation in the wholesale and retail trade sector and other private sectors, suggests that there may be considerable reluctance by private sector employers to hire Aboriginal people. This is largely a result of real or perceived views of Aboriginal people as undesirable employees. The Powell survey of employers indicated that many Port Augusta employers based their attitudes toward Aboriginals on a stereotype characterised by unreliability, a disposition to 'go walkabout' (absenteeism) and heavy drinking (Powell, 1978; 99). The stereotypes of Aboriginal people held by employers varies little from the general attitude of the non-Aboriginal population of Port Augusta. It is a view that is regularly reinforced by the harsh and derogatory newspaper reporting of the local tabloid. A prime example of this type of reporting was the campaign against the Aboriginal use of Gladstone Square as a drinking place. Extracts from an editorial on the Gladstone Square issue indicate the views of the local tabloid and

much of the non-Aboriginal population of Port Augusta towards the Aborigines of the town.

At the risk of again offending minority groups this newspaper must draw attention to the disgusting state of Gladstone Square. For weeks it has looked more like the rubbish tip than how our Parks and Gardens Superintendent, Mr. John Zwar would have it...complaints have been pouring into this office from concerned residents about the disgraceful situation - a situation which has been brought about by a section of the Aboriginal community. Racist statement?

Again certainly not. And even the most rabid 'do gooder' has to agree. ...In Gladstone Square there is a War Memorial. Returned servicemen pay their respects to fallen comrades at the annual Anzac Day service by the laying of wreaths at the Bandstand in the centre of the Square.

To them there is no more sacred ground in Port Augusta, yet it is continually defaced by drunken Aborigines.

From time to time a great hue and cry goes up from the 'do gooders' about mining companies encroaching on Aboriginal sacred grounds way out in the never never.

Apparently the 'do gooders' or the idiotic vocal minority, as we called them last week, think it is in order to adopt a policy of the black man can do no wrong - and the white man can do no right.

(The Transcontinental, 8/4/81).

Powell's work on unemployment in Port Augusta and my own employment survey reveal two important features about the employment structure of Port Augusta. Firstly, Aboriginal unemployment in Port Augusta is extremely high. In particular, it is high in comparison with the unemployment figures for the total population both locally and State-wide. Furthermore, the Aboriginal unemployment estimate for Port

Augusta matches figures available for other Aboriginal communities. For example, despite some variation in the method of calculation (Appendix IX) the Powell unemployment estimate of 55% is comparable with the estimate of 61.7% for Adelaide (Gale and Wundersitz, 1982; 121). Both figures are high in comparison with non-Aboriginal and total population equivalents, although, according to these figures, Port Augusta's Aboriginal population is marginally better off than the Adelaide population in terms of unemployment. The high unemployment rate suggests that a large sector of Port Augusta's Aboriginal population is reliant upon social security benefits and the range of welfare services operating for Aboriginal people in the town, such as training and employment programmes. Apart from those living in the sandhills on Davenport Reserve who have chosen to minimise their involvement with the welfare system, a significant proportion of the Aboriginal population of Port Augusta is reliant upon social services, funded housing or other welfare-orientated services. As Collmann (1979) point out, the complex welfare system offers a means by which the Government can penetrate and control Aboriginal communities.

The second major feature of the employment structure of Port Augusta's Aboriginal population is the high number of working Aboriginals who are employed by the Government in 'closed' sector jobs providing the welfare services upon which the unemployed sector so heavily relies. The employment of Aboriginals in 'closed' sector services

creates new obligations and alliances within the community. The spoils available from 'closed' sector jobs such as a secure income and community status, enable the Government to co-opt skills and personnel from the Aboriginal community to implement its own policies. While it is usual for 'closed' sector employees to work for the benefit of their community, the land rights process in Port Augusta reveals that this may not always be the case.

The data on employment in Port Augusta point to a community which is heavily entrenched in the social service sector, either as recipients of these services, administrators of the services, or a combination of both. The integral part these organisations play in the daily life of Port Augusta's Aboriginal community means their influence is considerable. While Government policy has created more positions in Aboriginal-related organisations, with the view to aiding self-determination, the increased participation of Aboriginals in and reliance upon these services has worked to magnify its role in the decision-making processes of the community. The aim is increased independence, but the reality is increased dependence and the establishment of new allegiances to bodies essentially external to the Aboriginal community but which have become indispensable because of the employment opportunities or welfare services they offer. In relation to the land rights scene in Port Augusta this high degree of involvement with Government services is revealed to work as a divisive instrument adding confusion and factionalism to the

political decision-making procedure (cf. Collmann, 1979).

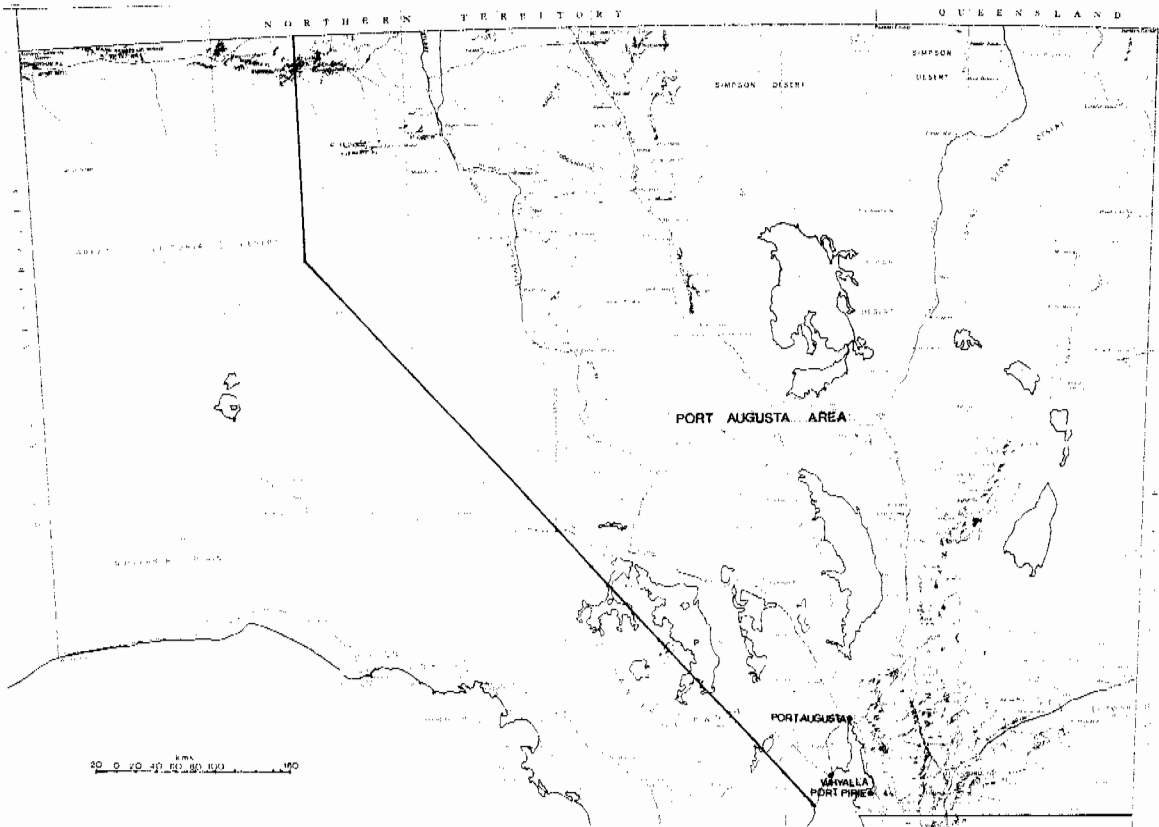
4.3.5 An Analysis of Organisations dealing with Aboriginal affairs in Port Augusta

The analysis of Aboriginal employment in Port Augusta illustrated the close relationship between the Aboriginal community and the many Aboriginal-directed services in the town. The wide variety of organisations dealing with Aboriginal affairs, and the regional scale of many of these organisations, makes Port Augusta an exception as a country town (Map 4:13). Port Augusta is endowed with more Aboriginal-related organisations and services than most towns of a similar size. Despite existing social difficulties among the Aboriginal population, many Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals within the town, and in the employ of the Government, view Port Augusta as being progressive in relation to Aboriginal affairs. Certainly the Aboriginal sector of Port Augusta can boast a number of attempts to establish 'forward-looking' services and organisations, although these usually resulted in failure through Government interference or were incorporated into existing Government agencies, thereby losing their original autonomy.

The Aboriginal Social Club, established in the early 1970s, is a good example of the emergence of an Aboriginal instigated body and its later demise through Government pressure. The Aboriginal Social Club attempted to co-ordinate a variety of childcare, housing, employment,

MAP 4:13 Region serviced by DAA in Port Augusta.

SOURCE: DAA (1981), Aboriginal Affairs Newsletter S.A.,
3 (1) (back cover).



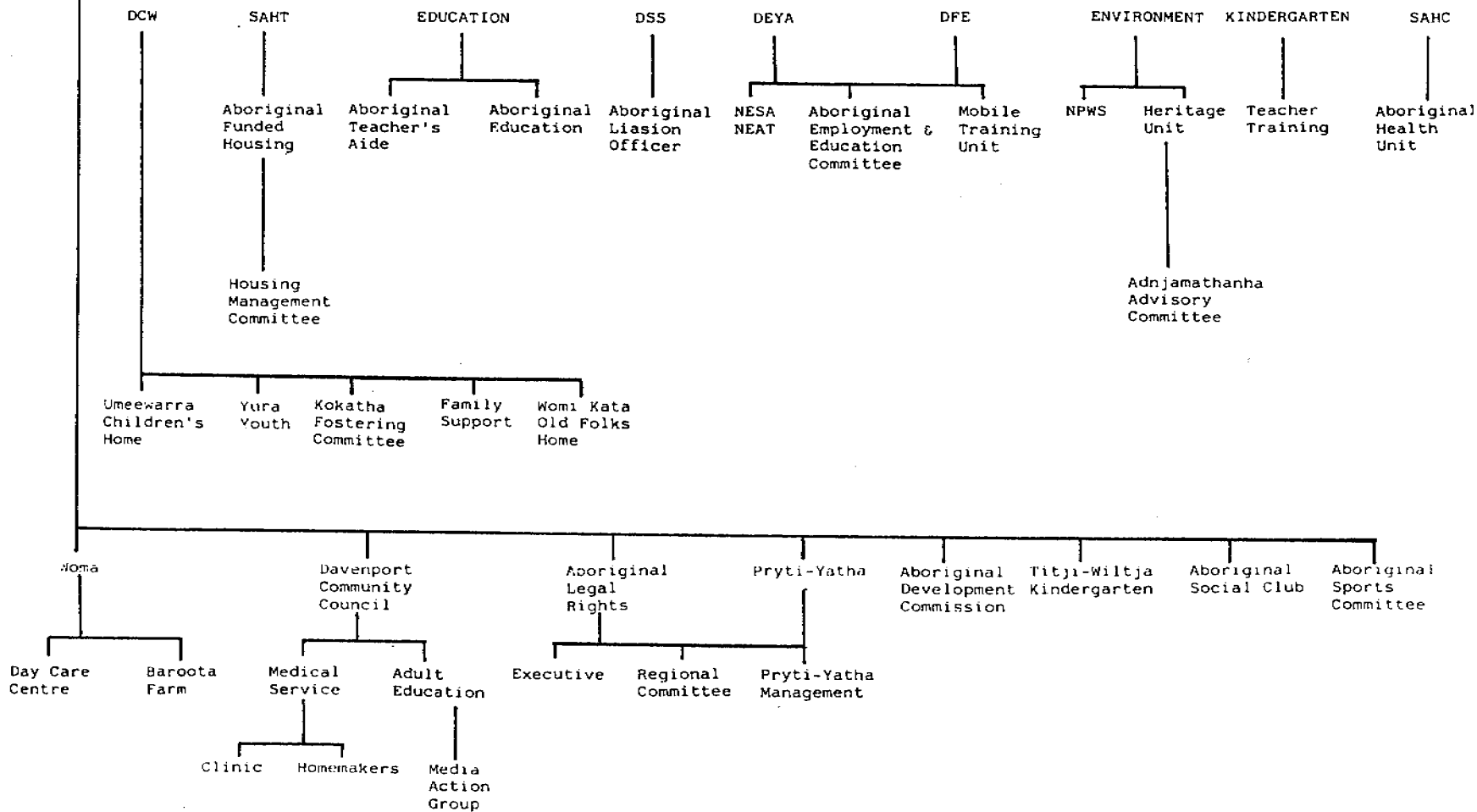
health and social activities under one roof (Smith, 1974). The Social Club concept emerged out of an awareness that the already multifaceted, uncoordinated and largely externally-run organisations serving the Aboriginal community needed an increased level of interaction and cooperation, and an increase in Aboriginal input. The Port Augusta Aboriginal Social Club was an attempt to transfer Aboriginal-orientated services from organisations such as the DAA into Aboriginal hands. Like most programmes of this nature in Port Augusta, Government pressure resulted in the collapse of the Social Club and a reversion to DAA control in Port Augusta. The dominance of the DAA in Port Augusta and its ability to control, through its various agencies, the course of Aboriginal affairs in the town suggests that Port Augusta is not as progressive as it looks or as the Government employees (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) suggest.

A closer look at the organisation structure of Port Augusta in 1981 reveals a complex hierarchy of organisations, agencies, committees and programmes (Figure 4:5). Logically, those organisations with the most power are the larger Government Departments with the most funding. The DAA and DCW emerge as the most influential organisations in Aboriginal affairs in Port Augusta, and fund or support more Aboriginal programmes than other Government Departments with an input to the Aboriginal community.

A unique feature of the Port Augusta organisational structure is the existence of the Community Affairs Panel

DAA

CAP



Inc (CAP). The CAP was established as a replacement for the Social Club, however, it varies from the Social Club concept significantly. Firstly, it was set up by and is funded by the DAA and therefore operates essentially as an extension of the Department. Secondly, while the Social Club attempted to establish its own coordinated Aboriginal services which were, as far as possible, independent of the Government, the CAP, in contrast, functions as an umbrella body co-ordinating existing services and programmes instigated by the Government. The CAP also operates as an advisory body and supervises the accounts of all DAA funded programmes (Table 4:3). However, its umbrella function, administered by a Committee, actually broadens its influence to organisations and programmes not financially accountable to the DAA or the CAP's supervisory function (Table 4:4). It is the CAP Committee which makes most of the decisions about the course of Aboriginal affairs in the town. Under the influence of the CAP, the organisational structure of Port Augusta is tightly interwoven. It is common practice for programmes dealing with multi-faceted issues such as land, health, employment and education to coordinate their activities through the CAP. This means that for any one issue a large number of different organisations may be involved. While this arrangement is good in that it ensures a wide variety of views are heard and skills coordinated, it can also lead to confusion for the Aboriginal clients and competition between the various organisations in an effort to have

TABLE 4:3 ORGANISATIONS WITH FINANCIAL SUPERVISION
BY CAP, 1981

Organisation	
1.	Davenport Community Council.
2.	Davenport Adult Education Centre.
3.	Aboriginal Medical Service.
4.	Woma.
5.	Tjitji Wiltja Kindergarten.
6.	Offenders Aid Rehabilitation Service.
7.	Pryti Yatha Sand Company.

TABLE 4:4 ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED ON THE CAP
COMMITTEE, 1981

Organisation	
1.	Davenport Community Council.
2.	Aboriginal Medical Service.
3.	Davenport Adult Education Centre.
4.	Port Augusta Woma Society
5.	Pryti Yatha Sand Co.
6.	Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement.
7.	Tjitji Wiltja.
8.	Offenders Aid Rehabilitation Service.
9.	National Aboriginal Conference.
10.	Department of Aboriginal Affairs.
11.	Port Augusta Housing Management.
12.	Department of Community Welfare.

Source: Field Work Survey, 1981.

their services and philosophies accepted above those of other organisations.

The CAP has generally been accepted as a progressive structure putting into action the self-determination concepts promoted by the Government. However, the close link between CAP and DAA, and its essentially Government-dependent committee, means that it can operate very easily as an agent of these Government bodies rather than an autonomous Aboriginal-directed organisation. Further its presence often adds confusion to the Aboriginal scene. For example, in early 1981 the Pryti-Yatha sand company received the first ADC loan to a South Australian Aboriginal community to supplement its DAA funding (The Transcontinental, 15/2/81). The responsibility of management of these funds rests with the CAP. Thus the Pryti-Yatha company is answerable to the DAA, ADC and CAP. When, later in 1981, a conflict arose over the finances of the sand company the Pryti-Yatha representatives were uncertain which body to approach to clarify their position. The arrangement was far from conducive to a rapid settlement of the problem and resulted in the Pryti-Yatha view being overridden by the CAP-DAA-ADC joint decision. Therefore, the CAP structure is an attempt to increase Aboriginal control but, by virtue of its close dependence upon Government bodies, often thwarts the input of smaller Aboriginal groups to the running of Aboriginal affairs in the town.

Similarly, the presence of an Aboriginal body such as the CAP establishes a seemingly satisfactory contact point

for outsiders wishing to gauge the Aboriginal viewpoint. For example, during the fieldwork period the CAP was contacted twice by mining company representatives wishing to assess the Aboriginal interest in a particular area. In both cases CAP involvement worked to hinder direct contact between the mining company representatives and those Aboriginals directly concerned with the land under consideration by the mining companies. Further, the views expressed by the CAP to the mining companies were often at variance with those held by the land rights groups. While the CAP may have merely been trying to extend its coordinating powers into this growing and problematic aspect of Aboriginal affairs in Port Augusta it did so with minimal consultation with the community.

An additional feature of significance in relation to the organisation of Aboriginal affairs in Port Augusta is the presence of the regional NAC representative in the town. It would be expected that the presence of a NAC representative would ensure that the Port Augusta community had a direct communication link to the Federal level of the DAA. However, the general community opinion of the elected representative was that she was inaccessible and did little for the community. In discussing these criticisms with the NAC representative it became apparent that her approach to her job was orientated more towards the Federal level and attempts to make the NAC body politically more effective than the local level, and ensuring her electorate had their requests met. This is not to say the Port Augusta

based NAC representative was ineffectual but simply that she judged that greater long-term rewards might be gained for Aboriginal people if her energies were directed towards Federal level changes, leaving local problems largely in the hands of local organisations.

The complexity of the organisation structure of Port Augusta is compounded by the abundance of Aboriginal committees formed in association with the organisations. The procedure of establishing an Aboriginal committee to act in an advisory capacity is well established in Port Augusta and is seen as an appropriate means by which the Aboriginal community may have an input to local decision-making. A common feature of the committee structure is its overlap in membership. It is not uncommon for one individual to be on more than one committee, and one Aboriginal interviewed in 1981 was on six committees at the one time. Committee participation was essentially limited to a core group of approximately thirty people and according to many informants it was this same group of 'interested' individuals which participated in past committees and which were expected to fill future committee positions.

This group of Aboriginals which participated in the committee system affiliated with Government organisations and programmes may be seen as one facet of the politically active sector of the Aboriginal community. Essentially they are participating in political units devised and endorsed by the Government departments they advise. This

core group act as brokers conveying the 'Aboriginal need' to the organisations they advise and suggesting possible solutions to these needs. As with Howard's Nyoongah study of contemporary Aboriginal brokers the core group of committee participants in Port Augusta is made up of a small 'acculturated élite' (1981; 115). In terms of the total Aboriginal population the participating core group constituted 2.6% of the total Aboriginal population of Port Augusta. The majority of the committee participants were currently or had in the past been employees in the 'closed' sector. Those who had not been employed in the 'closed' sector usually aspired towards such a job. The majority also lived in the Port Augusta township itself, rather than Bangalla Estate or Davenport Reserve. For many committee participants the committee procedure offered not only the ideological security of knowing (or thinking) they were helping the Aboriginal community as a whole but also important opportunities to secure and extend their brokerage roles within the inter-ethnic political sphere (Howard, 1981; 116).

4.3.6 The Adnjamathanha and Kokatha groups in Port Augusta

The historical analysis of the Adnjamathanha and Kokatha groups reveals, in greater detail, the associations between these two groups and Port Augusta. Briefly, however, the Kokatha group have been associated with the Port Augusta area for a much longer period than the Adnjamathanha. There is evidence to suggest the Kokatha moved through the Port

Augusta area in pre-contact times and had brief encounters with the town during its early development. Certainly by 1930 the Kokatha group were closely associated with the town and in the following twenty years became relatively permanent residents. In contrast the Adnjamathanha were tied to the remote Nepabunna Reserve (mission) until the late fifties and substantial movement into Port Augusta began only in the 1960s.

Today, however, the Adnjamathanha and Kokatha constitute the dominant groups in Port Augusta. Evidence gathered from oral sources, genealogical work and Aboriginal Funded Housing Lists suggests that the Adnjamathanha and Kokatha are the largest groups in Port Augusta by number. It is estimated, using these sources, that the Adnjamathanha constitute 15.4% of the total Aboriginal population in the town and the Kokatha 13.2%. Compared to other groups in the town these percentages are quite substantial, with the rest of the Aboriginal population consisting of many smaller groups.

Not only are the Kokatha and Adnjamathanha groups dominant in the town by number, they also constitute a large part of the Aboriginal workforce involved in Aboriginal-related services. An analysis of the tribal identity of those in 'closed' jobs, based on surname analysis and cross-referencing with oral sources, reveals that 44.6% are either Kokatha or Adnjamathanha. The Adnjamathanha group constitute 18.9% of the closed workforce and the Kokatha 25.7%. The remaining 55.4% of the 'closed' workforce is of mixed origin including the West Coast, the southern

reserves, Adelaide, the northern towns and Interstate. Furthermore, the Kokatha and Adnjamathanha account for 64.5% of those recorded as participating in Government-associated Aboriginal committees. Thus, the Kokatha and Adnjamathanha constitute a significant proportion of the Aboriginal participants in Government bodies in Port Augusta, both as employees or as participants in the formal committee system.

The Kokatha and Adnjamathanha involvement is essentially facilitated by the relatively high education standards of both these groups and their general assimilation into the European way of life. Most of the Kokatha and Adnjamathanha groups live within the township itself and many hold secure jobs. The Kokatha and Adnjamathanha involvement in the organisational framework of Aboriginal affairs means that both these groups have an increased exposure, direct or indirect (via gossip from kin), to the course of Aboriginal policy in the town. Further, they are aware of and participate in the politicking between various organisations and committees. Some also participate in individual moves to secure and extend their status and position in the inter-ethnic political field. This high level of participation in the inter-ethnic political field by these groups, or at least portions of these groups, has added to their general level of political awareness and has made the Kokatha and Adnjamathanha groups politically dominant in the community. However, the majority of Kokatha and Adnjamathanha political action is formal, that is, it is a product of

their participation in Government organisations or committees. The Government has been able to co-opt the skills and energies of the Kokatha and Adnjamathanha people participating in this formal, acceptable, and often manipulated, sphere of political action. The land rights analysis shows that individuals involved in this formal political sphere are often placed in situations of conflicting obligation and have their potential to serve community needs thwarted by Government expectation and their own desires to maintain their brokerage position in the inter-ethnic political area.

The Kokatha and Adnjamathanha as Government employees or advisors, are often unified in relation to issues and there is a general lack of overt animosity between the two. However, there is a persistent covert tension between the two groups which occasionally causes conflict in relation to certain issues. For example, it was not uncommon for Kokatha people within and outside the Government to complain that the Adnjamathanha had, since their influx into Port Augusta, taken over Aboriginal affairs. The tribal identity breakdown of Adnjamathanha and Kokatha participation in the closed workforce does not substantiate this claim of an actual take-over. However, it is certain that the movements of the educated, ex-mission, Adnjamathanha people into Port Augusta has been accompanied by their rapid acceptance into Government ranks. For the long-term Kokatha residents the Adnjamathanha presence has increased competition for both jobs in the 'closed' sector and positions on committees.

It is somewhat ironic, in the light of the Kokatha claims of Adnjamathanha domination, that the two most influential positions in Port Augusta, the DAA field officer and the CAP head, were held by Aboriginals identifying as Kokatha. Discussion with Kokatha people about their covert dislike of the Adnjamathanha revealed that the basis of the complaint was housing allocations within the town. The Aboriginal housing position was filled by an Aboriginal woman who had been raised in the Colebrook Aboriginal Children's Home at Quorn and who had later married a local Adnjamathanha man. She is not Adnjamathanha by birth but is considered by the Adnjamathanha people as one of their tribe. The Kokatha complained that this woman's alliance with the Adnjamathanha had resulted in the Adnjamathanha getting better houses. In reality this complaint is unfounded because housing was allocated on the basis of need. However, it may be that the presence of a familiar Adnjamathanha woman in this organisation encouraged the Adnjamathanha to use its services and also made the service aware of Adnjamathanha needs above those of the Kokatha. Tension between the Adnjamathanha and Kokatha was normally covert or, on some occasions, entirely absent as they joined together for a common cause. However, in the housing issue, where the people are dealing with a scarce but desired resource the two groups were no longer able to cooperate and in fact saw themselves as competitors.

A similar incident of open complaint emerged in 1981

over a land issue. Late in 1981 the ADC purchased the Mount Serle pastoral lease for the Adnjamathanha people. This was the second pastoral lease the Government had purchased for the Adnjamathanha. In contrast the Kokatha group of Port Augusta remained landless. The Kokatha argued that the ADC purchase was a result of there being an Adnjamathanha man employed by ADC, and favouritism on his part and that of the ADC. To a degree the Kokatha criticism was justified in that the Adnjamathanha community, by virtue of a relative being employed by the ADC, did hear of the pending sale of Mount Serle quickly and were encouraged by ADC to make a speedy submission. However, the ADC's acceptance of the Adnjamathanha submission was less dependent upon the possible biases of its Adnjamathanha employee than externally induced considerations such as the opportunity to purchase, the number of cultural sites recorded by the Heritage Unit, and the dire employment needs of the remote Nepabunna Aboriginal community.

Both the housing issue and the Mount Serle land issue illustrate tension resulting from the competing interests of the Adnjamathanha and Kokatha. The Kokatha and Adnjamathanha both need and want access to scarce resources such as employment, housing and land. Their sharing of a common, local framework of Government organisations and agencies forces them to compete with each other for the attentions of these organisations with a view to gaining access to the desired or needed resources (cf. Cohen, 1969; 192). Thus, the unsubstantiated Kokatha claims of

Adnjamathanha dominance are the result of the increased competition which has resulted from the recent movement of Adnjamathanha people into Port Augusta.

It is logical that the two most 'political' groups in Port August, the Adnjamathanha and the Kokatha, are also the groups participating in land rights action within the town. Their participation in and familiarity with the inter-ethnic political sphere has furnished the Port Augusta factions of the Adnjamathanha and Kokatha groups with the necessary skills to enter into land rights politics. The detailed analysis of the Kokatha and Adnjamathanha participation in land rights which follows reveals that this facet of contemporary political life emulates the same basic model which has been alluded to in relation to more general inter and intra-ethnic political processes in Port Augusta. In the inter-ethnic field, land rights politics is characterised by the presence of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal brokers. In the intra-ethnic arena political action and decision-making are characterised by temporary unification, competition, conflict and factionalism. The competitive nature of land rights politics is a result of the scarcity of needed resources and it is shown that this competition and resultant factionalism are exacerbated by the penetration of external agents seeking to control the Aboriginal situation.