



ABORIGINAL HOUSING IN REMOTE SOUTH AUSTRALIA

AN OVERVIEW OF HOUSING AT OAK VALLEY, MARALINGA TJARUTJA LANDS

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This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my dissertation being available for loan.

SIGNED.....

.....DATE 10.02.00.....



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ABSTRACT

This study presents an overview of housing at Oak Valley, a remote Aboriginal community in the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands. It paints a broad contextual picture of the political processes and resultant housing, examines specific cultural and environmental issues relevant to the population and remote areas of South Australia, documents the process and structures for the provision of housing and investigates the subsequent housing types.

The study utilises the ethnological techniques of participant observation and social survey to evaluate housing at Oak Valley. This includes observations of housing features, usage, occupant aspirations and housing issues associated with the occupation of moveable housing, community built shelters and community housing. Staff housing is also addressed in the same manner to gain insight into variances in usage.

The overview illustrates that housing choices for Aboriginal people in remote areas in South Australia are particularly limited. Housing is based on non-Aboriginal models with adaptations specific to environmental conditions. The development of housing models for specific Aboriginal lifestyles and cultural issues is minimal and resisted by the Aboriginal occupants. At the same time occupants' satisfaction levels were consistent with the ability of housing to perform to cultural needs and occupants' lifestyle. Encouraged themes include the development of public participation processes, post occupancy evaluation and individual consultation to involve occupants in the housing process.



SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Housing opportunities for Aboriginal people in remote areas of South Australia are limited. Private rental opportunities do not exist in these communities and the costs of construction are far beyond the financial capacity of the majority of residents¹.

Opportunities for housing become limited to living in wiltjas² (bush shelters) in winter, yuus (windbreaks) in summer, sharing with other family members, old car bodies, caravans or housing provided under federal and state funded public housing and health programs. Housing need in remote areas has been great and housing supply has been unable to keep up with the formation of new family groups (Stewart pers. comm.). Little formal evaluation of the public housing constructed has been conducted. Approaches have primarily focussed on the supply of housing and meeting housing need.

1.1 AIMS

The aim of this dissertation is to give an overview of housing provided for Aboriginal people in remote areas of South Australia. In order to grasp the structure and nature of current programs and housing, it is imperative to examine the contextual background in which housing has been provided. To understand the approaches to public housing made by service providers which differ from mainstream urban housing, it is important to look at the cultural and environmental elements of life in remote areas. A case study area (Oak Valley in the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands) has been chosen to give specific housing examples illustrating these points. The history, settlement patterns and views of the occupants at Oak Valley are outlined to further understand the background and some views of the residents.

Therefore, the structure of the dissertation will cover the following areas:

- historical perspective of the delivery, policy and type of public housing to Aboriginal people in remote areas,
- cultural factors influencing housing,
- environmental factors influencing housing,
- the structure of programs, service providers and delivery processes,
- contextual information relating to the case study area and
- an overview and evaluation of housing at the case study area.

This will provide an overview of housing supplied to Aboriginal people in remote areas of South Australia.

1.3 HOUSING AS PART OF A GOVERNMENT AGENDA

To assess current housing it is imperative to look briefly at how housing in remote communities came about. As with all government programs relating to Aboriginal people, the supply (or non-supply) of public housing relied on the different approaches reflecting the government policy of the day. Policies since 1829 can be summarised as follows:

- Colonisation
- Segregation and Protection
- Assimilation
- Integration
- Self Determination
- Self Management

Patterns within the policies appeared for each of the policy periods. These generalised trends related either to the type of housing provided or the agenda set by policy makers in the provision of housing. Housing as a visible aspect of change in Aboriginal society has been used extensively to illustrate various government agendas. According to Sykes

Progress, as with justice, must not only be done, but must be seen to be done, and housing is the most visible aspect of improvement to the Black community. (Sykes 1989, p.62)

The different agendas for those involved with Aboriginal housing were poignantly



FIGURE 1 Positions on Aboriginal Housing

This cartoon satirising the various positions on Aboriginal housing was used by as a cover for a journal in 1988 and illustrated the multitude of views various professions regarding the provision of public housing to Aboriginal people. The stakeholders represented do not include the future occupants of such housing.

source: Architecture Australia 1988

illustrated on the cover of a 1988 issue of Architecture Australia (Figure 1). To view the current climate in context, it is imperative to look briefly at the policy eras from the time of segregation and protection and the results they fostered.

1.3 ABORIGINAL HOUSING DURING SEGREGATION AND PROTECTION

Early governments viewed Aboriginal people as...primitive and uncivilised (Hall 1997, p.3) and colonial governments set out to 'protect' Aboriginal people by keeping Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations apart. Aboriginal people were controlled by the Aborigines Act 1911. The Act gave the Chief 'Protector'³ of Aborigines wide powers over all Aboriginal people. The Chief 'Protector' could cause Aboriginal people to be

...kept within the boundaries of any reserve or institution

OR ...could be ordered to move their camps from any town or municipality, town or township.

(Mattingley & Hampton 1988, p.44)

Housing for Aboriginal people during the Protection era depended on the type of settlement they lived in. Generally living styles included

- camps on the edges of towns and cities,
- missions and government stations and
- nomadic camps.

Aboriginal people camping on the edges of towns and cities became known as 'fringe dwellers'. Their communities were scattered all over South Australia on Council or Crown land on the outskirts of urban areas : Bordertown, Meningie, Berri, Winkie, Port Augusta, Copley, Marree, Oodnadatta, Port Lincoln, Warrambo and Ceduna among others.

Gale observed housing at Meningie:

Kerosene tins are opened out and beaten flat. Wheat bags are torn open and sewn together.

In the absence of other materials, bark and twigs are used for thatch. (Gale 1964, p.319)

Building materials were recycled from rubbish dumps and roadsides, and dwellings tended to consist of one or two rooms.

The second type of housing was found at missions and government stations established for

Aboriginal people as a method of containing populations within certain areas and 'civilising' Aboriginal people. Permanent housing in these settlements was not assured⁴ and many Aboriginal people continued to live in camps whilst working on missions. Stone cottages were constructed by Aboriginal workers at Gerard, Raukkan (Port McLeay), Port Pearce and Koonibba and Nepabunna (Gale 1964). These were one or two roomed and documentation shows current housing issues such as overcrowding and mobility already existing then (Gale 1964). Other missions provided dormitory accommodation for children⁵ while adults continued living in camps. In other areas Aboriginal people continued to live in nomadic family camp situations. Camps were normal for some Aboriginal people well until the 1980s in some areas of remote South Australia, although several major changes happened on a nationwide basis which lead to housing policy and provision as it is today.

1.4 HOUSING TRENDS DURING THE ASSIMILATION PERIOD

The first mentions of assimilation policy appeared in government statements in 1937 but practices promoting assimilation were in place well before assimilation became the official joint Commonwealth and State government policy in 1951 (Hall 1997). Housing became a major tool in promoting assimilation policy. The assimilation policy was defined at the Native Welfare Conference as:

The policy of assimilation means that all aborigines and part aborigines are expected to eventually attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community enjoying the same rights and privileges accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs as other Australians. (Native Welfare Conference in Rowley 1971, p.398)

However the policy was based on the belief ...that 'full bloods' and 'half castes' needed to be treated in different ways (Griffiths 1995, p.63). Government policies intended to separate the two groups, and to ease 'mixed blood' Aboriginal people into non-Aboriginal areas, whilst maintaining missions, reserves and camps on the fringes of non-Aboriginal society for 'full-blood' Aboriginal people to dwell in⁶.

The use of housing as an assimilation tool began in South Australia when the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT)⁷ began their Aboriginal housing program in rural areas in 1953⁸ (Marsden 1986) with an aim:...to build rental houses in rural towns for specially selected 'part-Aboriginal' couples (Marsden 1986). When 'specially selected' couples were judged to have reached a ..reasonable enough standard of living (Marsden 1986) to leave missions, non-Aboriginal community consent was required prior to their occupation of public housing in towns. After this it became illegal for them to visit the former missions without the consent of the Aboriginal 'Protection' Board. These moves formed the basis for select Aboriginal people to join mainstream public housing programs in rural areas.

Towards the end of the 1950s, more sinister moves were made to use housing as an assimilation tool. In 1957 the first 'transitional' house was designed and constructed in Geraldton, Western Australia (Heppell 1979). The prototype house, designed by Syd Adams was standardised into three types (Figures 2 and 3), Stages One, Two and Three. The housing was designed for mission setting, where Aboriginal families could spend time ...perfecting domestic skills (Heppell 1979, p.16) before moving into mainstream public housing programs in towns. In theory, Aboriginal families could move from stage to stage of the housing depending on their success or failure to grasp non-Aboriginal living practices. The transitional house consisted of one, two or three rooms respectively (relating to stages). Stage One housing consisted :

...of a single room of 9.3 square metres in area, with a verandah of 5.9 square metres... The roof and walls were angle iron, the floor concrete and there were small louvre windows. Two walls could be raised to allow a breeze to flow through. A wood stove was located on the verandah.. (Ross 1987, p.21)

At the other end of the scale Stage Three had:

...three internal rooms with a total area of twenty-eight square metres... ..The central room, which was entered from the verandah, had a wood stove. The end rooms, which had to be entered through kitchen were intended as bedrooms. The design was smoky and hot. (Ross 1987, p.21)

Tatz (in Heppell 1979) calculated that it would take approximately 150 years to

complete the process of transition from mission to non-Aboriginal housing in a township. However, due to insufficient funding to launch a staged approach, once allocated a 'transitional' house Aboriginal families would be likely to remain there indefinitely⁹. The houses were extremely unpleasant to live in, being hot in summer and cold in winter with temperature variations of up to 10 degrees difference between internal/external temperatures (Heppell 1979). Overcrowding was also an issue. Ross in 1987 reported minimum occupancy rates for Stage One transitional housing¹⁰ as one person, with average maximum occupancy rates of six people. The Stage Three housing was found by Ross to be

....occupied by an average minimum of seven and (an) average maximum of thirteen people.

Although some contained many more people.

(Ross 1987, p.21)

Even with these inadequacies and minimal trials, transitional housing was adopted as a model for Aboriginal housing throughout Australia (Memmott 1988). Transitional housing formed the first approach at public housing for Aboriginal people in South Australia and was administered by the Department of Community Welfare in Aboriginal missions and government reserves. It was termed 'aid' and funded as such.

The adoption of this model for housing played a significant role in the future development of Aboriginal housing. Future attempts were based on finding the 'ideal design solution'. The benefits in developing a model for housing were convenience, low cost to build en masse and, if designed to the occupants' needs, could perform well. Models for housing seldom take into account the needs of a wide range of occupants. Transitional housing was so culturally and environmentally inappropriate that failure was inevitable. The housing did not perform and was often damaged or destroyed by occupants on whom it must have had detrimental impacts¹¹. The general consensus of public housing authorities was to deem the area of Aboriginal housing a 'problem' and to 'blame the victims'. The development of this 'model' also began the preoccupation of designers to develop a model for Aboriginal housing, which still exists today.

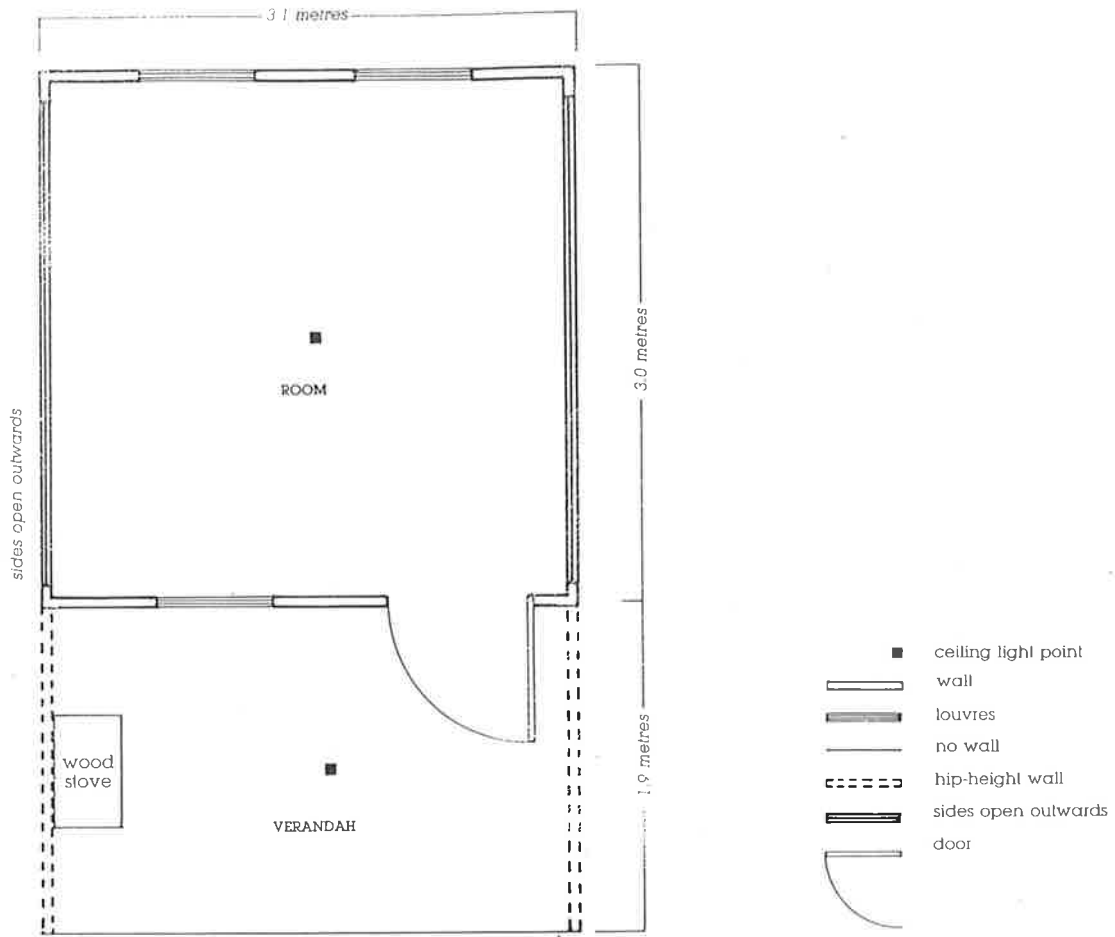


FIGURE 2 Floor plan of Transitional Housing, Stage One

Transitional housing varied considerably within and between States. Stage One housing was often no more than an iron shed. Other common building materials for walls were concrete blocks (i.e. besser blocks). The thermal performance of materials in arid locations was poor with high heat loss at night and extreme heat gain during the day. The system of assimilating Aboriginal people into non-Aboriginal styles of living did not include the provision of any material possessions apart from the house structure, nor did it provide any education or training in the use of a house. Aboriginal people were meant to grasp non-Aboriginal living standards by dwelling in the inappropriate structures.

source : Ross 1987

1.5 INTEGRATION

Whilst no official government policy moves towards integration are recognised to have begun in the early 1960s, Aboriginal people were allowed to enrol to vote in 1962 (Mattingley & Hampton 1988) and the goal of government policies became to integrate all Aboriginal people into one Australian society (Sanders in Paris 1993). The general trend was to encourage movement from missions and government reserves to rural towns. One method used was the provision of special purpose Commonwealth grants to the States especially for the provision of public rental accommodation for Aboriginal people.

Conditions were attached to the grants:

... 40 per cent of expenditure should occur within the boundaries of cities and towns, and not more than 20 per cent should be spent on transitional housing.

(Sanders in Paris 1993, p.217)

Under these incentives, the provision of public housing which took into account specific Aboriginal needs was not entertained. Funding for public housing in remote areas was non-existent, it was assumed that all Aboriginal people had either been moved to missions and government run reserves during the 1950's 'round-ups'¹² or had moved into camps on the edges of townships¹³. From these settlements it was assumed that Aboriginal people would be educated in non-Aboriginal ways of life and move to rural towns and assimilate into the non-Aboriginal population.

1.6 APPROACHES DURING SELF DETERMINATION

The 1967 Constitutional Amendment Referendum removed two exclusionary references to Aboriginal people from the Constitution and allowed the Commonwealth to take a greater responsibility for Aboriginal affairs (Sanders in Paris 1993). The first references to housing within the self-determination policies occurred in 1971¹⁴:

Labor will give priority to a vigorous housing scheme in order to properly house all Aboriginal families within a period of ten years. In compensation for the loss of traditional lands, funds will be made to assist Aborigines who wish to purchase their own homes. The personal wishes of Aborigines as to design and location will be taken into account.

(Labor Party 1971, p.5)

Housing was a pivotal point to attack the poverty cycle and to achieve a number of

objectives. The provision of 'proper' housing was aimed at achieving a variety of objectives such as :

- education: by giving children an environment where study could be conducted,
- improved health outcomes: by improving living conditions,
- community participation: through housing management committees,
- provision of employment and training: through construction and
- promotion of Aboriginality (Heppell 1979).

The policies, while appearing radically different, still worked on the presumption that Aboriginal people needed to 'advance' and assume non-Aboriginal values and living standards.

A number of programs were initiated aimed at improving living standards through the provision of housing. The Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs administered a program where housing management committees were set up on the former missions and reserves. The housing management committees became responsible for the planning, construction, and project management of new housing. The intent of the federal government was to construct large amounts of habitable housing quickly to reduce the appalling conditions that many Aboriginal people were living in. The housing management committees were formed as extensions of the community boards which self-managed many of the former missions settlements and government stations. In South Australia, the housing management committees reported to a board with Aboriginal representation set up as an adjunct to the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT). Lowitja O'Donoghue (Lois O'Donoghue) a member of the Aboriginal Housing Board, described the formation of the Aboriginal Funded Unit and the housing management committees in 1975:

(it is)...a unique example of community participation on housing management, as the only housing program in Australia with any meaningful Aboriginal involvement and probably the only housing program of any size in Australia that is virtually run by the community it serves...

(Marsden 1986, p.377)

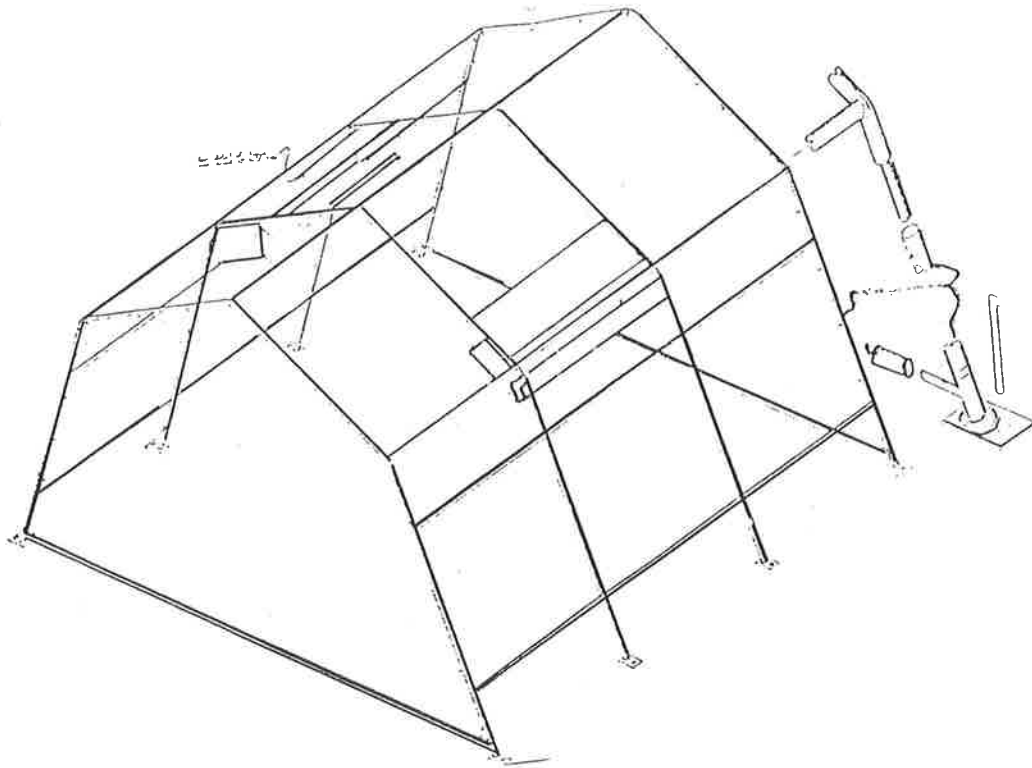
The housing management committees had differing approaches to providing housing, including:

- construction by outside contractors¹⁵,
- construction by local labour¹⁶,
- culturally appropriate housing (Figure 6 & 8),
- experimental housing (Figure 4, 6, 7 & 8),
- pre-fabricated housing, and
- transportable housing¹⁷ (Figure 5).

These approaches form much of the current stock of housing present in Aboriginal communities throughout South Australia. In reality, the housing management committees were ill equipped to take over housing programs with ease. Under funding conditions, the housing management committees were committed to employing a technical consultant for construction projects (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Housing Panel Inc. 1977) and architects and design professionals were contracted to a number of projects in communities in this capacity. Lack of financial management skills teamed with little experience in construction works, meant that much project funding was eaten up by consultancy fees and mismanagement. In other cases, the communities' lack of experience with differing housing styles resulted in inappropriate housing¹⁸ being erected or partially erected and abandoned. Communities were encouraged to construct housing, which lead to sub-standard housing being built in many instances¹⁹. The Government, by funding these programs only had blocked communities' abilities to choose alternative futures. Other projects, such as re-establishing homelands were difficult to undertake as representation on the housing management committee consisted of Aboriginal people whose priorities were housing. Ironically the government through self-determination policies, appears to have set the agenda.

1.6.1 The Aboriginal Housing Panel

In 1972, the ANZAAS²⁰ seminar on Aboriginal housing was held by the Royal Australian



**FIGURE 4 One Example of Experimental Housing for Remote Localities
The James Wiltja**

The James Wiltja was developed by Bill James from the South Australian Housing Trust. It was approximately 2 metres square and 1.4 metres high. The structure consisted of interlocking steel rods which was trialed with a number of materials as covers²¹.

In camp situations they were often extended with the use of galvanised iron and pickets. Major shortcomings of James Wiltjas were the small size, poor thermal performance²² and water penetration through joins of the materials. Additionally dust and dog control would have been poor.

source : Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Housing Panel 1977



**FIGURE 5 Example of Transportable Housing
Yalata Aboriginal Community**

Transportable housing has been used by many communities as a means of immediately reducing housing need at a relatively low cost. The dilemmas of using this form of housing are relatively clear. Transportable housing is of a limited size and unlikely to suit the needs of larger family groups. Poor thermal performance, an inability to naturally ventilate housing and a lack of verandah areas show transportables could be a poor choice for long term housing. The relationship between internal and external areas is also non-existent in this recent example.

It is unlikely that the transportables are replaced once on site. In some instances transportables constructed of dangerous materials (e.g. asbestos) were purchased. Separate funding is not available for their safe demolition and removal.

Institute of Architects (RAIA) and the then Council for Aboriginal Affairs (Memmott 1988). The seminar noted aspects of Aboriginal life which influenced housing and a panel was set up as part of the RAIA to gain input from architects. From the period 1972 to 1975 work by the Aboriginal Housing Panel centred on assessing independent work and researching culturally appropriate solutions. The work done by independent consultants was generally

... well meaning and idealistic, but they lacked any rigorous discipline in their approach and were sometimes guilty of inadequate consultation and understanding of their clients' lifestyle, needs and social problems. There was no text book to follow, no systematic research base, nor any agreed upon research methodology to work from... (Memmott 1988, p.37)

Many building projects were commissioned by housing management committees with funding intended to alleviate acute housing disadvantage. Some of the better known house designs from this period were bravely experimental in nature and included :

- Knox's organic house at Ernabella ²³,
- Howroyd's circular organic house at Laverton (Figure 6),
- McPhee's Apatula house (Figure 7), and
- Chappel's Houses at Iwantja (Indulkana)(Figure 8).

Most of this work was aimed at finding 'culturally appropriate' models for housing to solve the 'Aboriginal housing problem'. One of the main difficulties that architects found when looking at culturally appropriate models was the lack of acceptance from the Aboriginal communities. Memmott noted :

Ironically no architect, as far as I know, has found an Aboriginal client who totally subscribes to this approach (culturally appropriate design). There is a strong architectural conservatism amongst many Aboriginal clients which results in requests for conventional three bedroom type houses. Any diversion from local white standards of rural housing may be resented.

(Memott in Dept of Lands and Housing (NT) 1991, p.12)

The Aboriginal Housing Panel was restructured in 1975, and incorporated as a company, funded by the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs with a majority Aboriginal panel

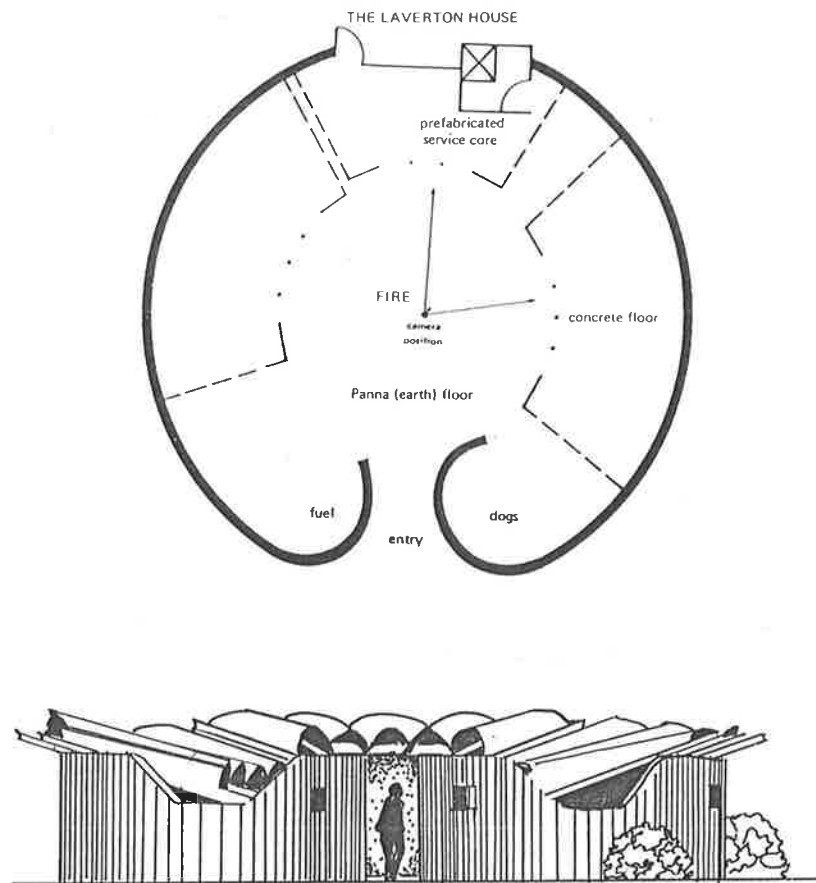


FIGURE 6 Elevation and Plan, Howroyd's Laverton House

The house featured a central area for a fire, an earthen floor, an area for dogs and a prefabricated service core. One of the design principles was to see the sky at night from the fire area and organic round walls similar to wiltjas. The first house was built by Aboriginal people Wongatha Wonganarra (willing people) in Laverton with others planned in initial stage. The houses were expected to be able to be produced for approximately \$8,000 - \$10,000 (1975 prices) half the price of state housing at the time (Lipscombe 1975). The actual cost was \$54,000 (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Panel Inc 1977).

The house ignored several aspects of Aboriginal culture. It was built at a 'native reserve' which had been abandoned since a shooting incident several years prior. The house had no shade on the exterior to sit and observe the horizon and community movement, thereby isolating the residents (Heppell 1979). The house was occupied by four pensioners, who found they were unable to secure their possessions and felt unsafe from people under the influence of alcohol.

Environmentally inappropriate, the house offered little protection from dust, wind, flies and rain. The building was abandoned and the occupants returned to self-made housing (Heppell 1979).

source : Lipscombe 1975

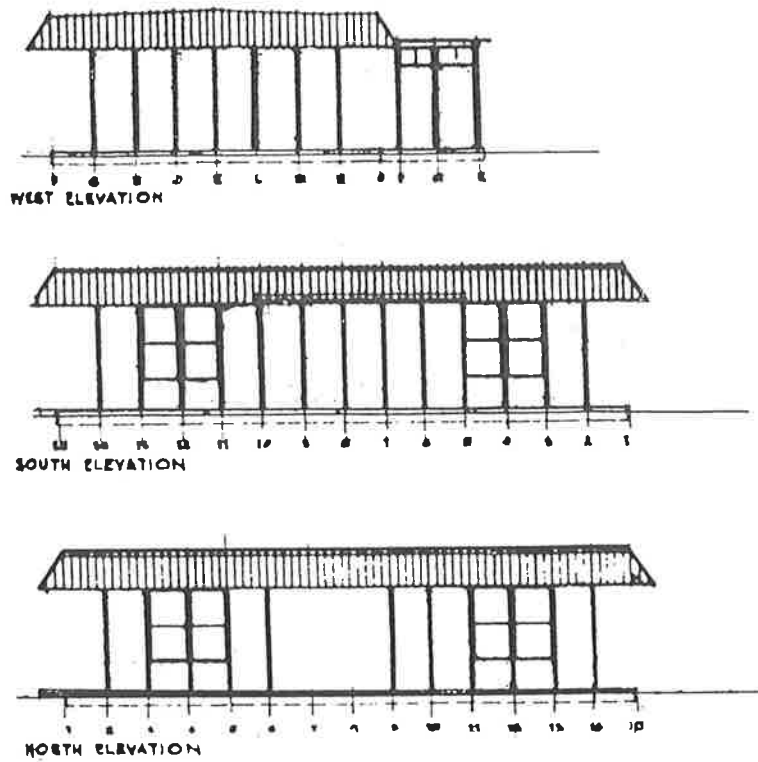


FIGURE 7 Elevations, McPhee's Aputula Space Frame House

Designed by an Alice Springs architectural firm consulting to the Aputula Construction Company (an Aboriginal company) in the early 1970s. The house was conceived as a prefabricated modular house to be constructed by Aboriginal people on site. The non-Aboriginal conventional floor layout house contained three bedrooms (all with external access) and one bathroom with adjoining living, dining and kitchen areas. The house included a 2m verandah with concrete flooring²⁴. The design has some features adapted into current housing in remote Aboriginal housing within South Australia.

The house was prefabricated and sold in kit form. The roof was constructed first using square based steel pyramids containing some 1400 nuts and bolts with the non load bearing walls constructed last.

Difficulties occurred in the construction phases, as assembly of the space frame roof was complex and the cost of the house did not compare favourably to others when government subsidies were removed. Several of the trial houses were abandoned, and appeared to be vacated due to spatio-relationships within the community rather than amenities that the house provided. Memmott (1977) noted that the houses failed to provide 'the immediacy of normal camp life' for some occupants. Shortfalls of the housing included considerable breakages²⁵ and damage after occupation, lack of airflow, poor thermal performance²⁶, and vulnerability of housing to penetration by water (Memmott 1977).

source : Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Housing Panel Inc 1977

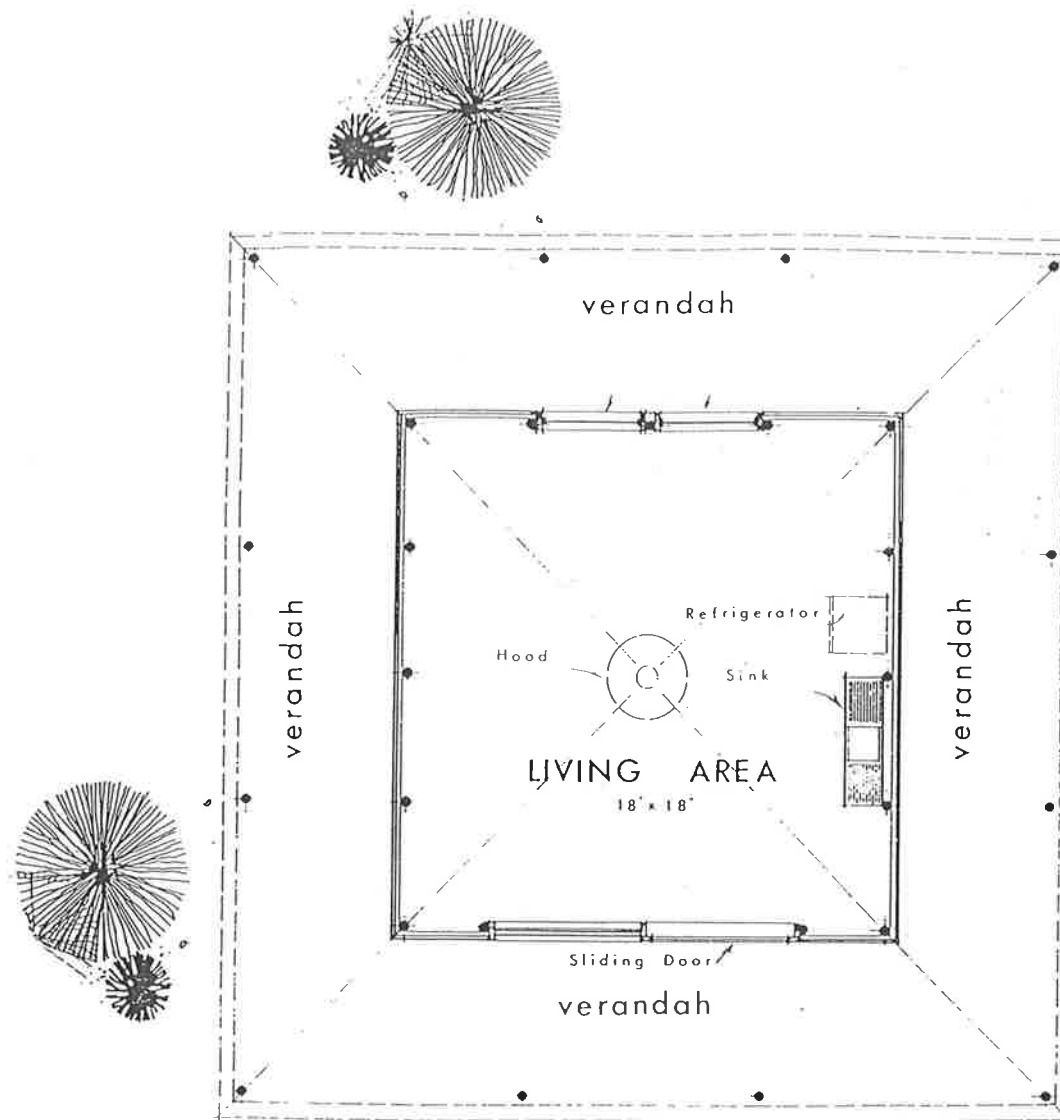


FIGURE 8 Floor plan: Chappel's Housing at Iwantja (Indulkana)

Architect, John Chappel designed these houses in one, two, three and four roomed variations. Only the one roomed houses were built. Known colloquially as the 'monkey houses' the houses were designed to resemble the traditional wiltja and be orientated to the sun and to take advantage of the prevailing winds. The houses had pyramidal roof and the eaves were 4'6" in height, making the occupant stoop to enter and be unable to stand upright in some areas of the house. (Chapel u.k.)

The houses still stand at Iwantja but are not used as a permanent residences.

source : Chappel u.k.

representation²⁷. The focus became research into Aboriginal/architect interface rather than regional experimental design (Memmott 1988). In 1978, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs closed the Panel down, reverting its responsibilities and role to the Departments of Aboriginal Affairs and the Federal Department of Housing and Construction. The role of designers outside the public sector was considerably reduced by this move and subsequent initiatives by architects were reduced.

1.6.2 Homelands Movement

The need for housing for remote areas was highlighted²⁸ when greater numbers of Aboriginal people began to move back to traditional lands in what became known as the Homelands Movement (occurring simultaneously with the Land Rights Movement). Charles Perkins²⁹ in the Blanchard Report described the benefits of the Homelands Movement (then known in non-Aboriginal circles as the outstation movement):

The outstation movement is very, very beneficial in getting out and back to their own country in order to be able to be more independent, and more creative, to be able to accept their responsibilities and exercise authority in the appropriate way so that the younger people can learn as a consequence of that...People are going back to places they are familiar with. It is their country; it is their dreaming place; that is where they belong; and so from there they can start a number of other things. They can look at what options are available to them; what opportunities are available; what is good and bad things are in white societies. It is breathing space.

(Perkins in Blanchard 1987, p.85)

The greater movement of people back to traditional lands highlighted the often appalling living conditions of those already dwelling in remote areas and the need for appropriate housing and living solutions.

1.6.3 Centre for Appropriate Technology

A series of meetings was held between the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA), CSIRO and other Aboriginal organisations in the period 1975-79 in which ...the mismatch between Aboriginal lifestyle and available technology...(Centre for Appropriate Technology 1997, p.4) was highlighted and discussed as well as the poor living conditions in many remote communities. In 1980 the Centre for Appropriate

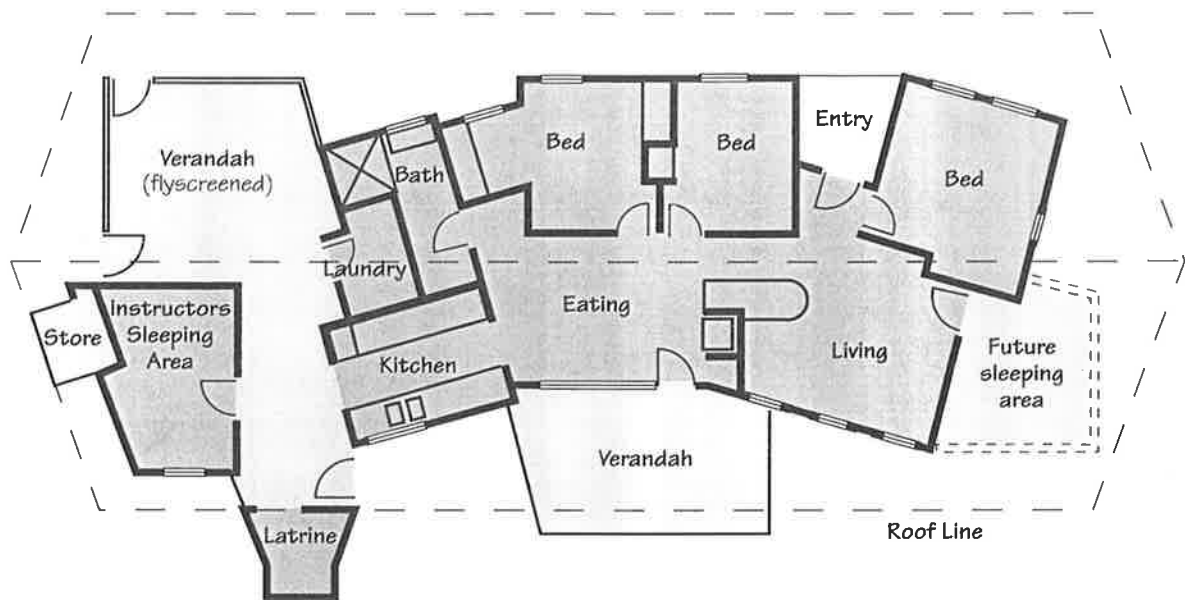


FIGURE 9 Example of current housing design work of the Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT)
Floor Plan Olive's House at Jay Creek, NT

A demonstration house designed by Centre for Appropriate Technology and built by Arriljhjere Aboriginal Corporation in 1997. Incorporates the following points :

- arid zone design,
- mud brick walls,
- stabilised rammed earth footings and floors,
- solar electric and water heating,
- composting human waste systems and
- dry toilet.

The resident finds the composting toilet slightly smelly but is happy with the house.

source: National Technology Resource Centre 1996

Technology (CAT) opened in Alice Springs with funding from the DAA and Centralian College, providing on ground training research and design into low technology alternatives in houses and living solutions. It is now a self-funded non-profit organisation operating out of Cairns and Alice Springs which devises and sells low technology options in housing and alternative living solutions (Figure 9). It has also devised planning systems for increased community participation in planning. CAT is used as a consultant by state housing authorities in some instances and publishes research.

1.6.4 Reforming the System

After the continued period of relatively high program funding and inconsistent results, the 'Review of Delivery of Services' financed by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs³⁰ was commissioned in 1976. Hay in this review noted:

...the lack of preliminary investigation by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs of a housing association's capacity and commitment to build. (Hay quoted in Heppell 1979, p.26)

This report highlighted the poor financial and project accountability by housing management committees with large amounts of funding being consumed by consultancy fees.

In the same year the Senate Select Committee on Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders reported:

We happen to believe that Aboriginal housing needs are not especially complicated and can be catered for by drawing on the resources of public housing authorities.

(Senate Select Committee 1976, p.207)

Increased program funding, increased awareness of Aboriginal issues, and the establishment of the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs did little to focus on the specific issues and social disadvantage in housing in Aboriginal communities. Remote communities were often the last to get housing, and many had no access to housing programs. Wallace (1977) described the conditions at one bush camp in the AP Lands:

... despite government grants for European-style housing, (the community) were still living in primitive, sordid conditions in wiltja or yu³¹ made now out of the discarded bits of iron, packing cases, canvas, old blankets, cardboard, scraps of anything-even paper.

(Wallace 1977, p33)

Redressing disadvantage became an issue during the late seventies and early eighties and a number of positive moves were made. Funding from the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) became tied with equal funds contributed by the State and the Commonwealth. As a result of the tied funding, South Australian remote housing programs were instigated by the then Aboriginal Housing Unit. The program known then as the Fringe Dwellers Program³² provided basic shelters, rebuilds of sub-standard housing, and housing. These were generally built by the communities and early problems were encountered, such as:

- slow work,
- construction not up to standard,
- distractions within the community, and
- inadequate supervision and inspection of construction.

(Aboriginal Housing Authority 1999, s.4, p.1)

1.6.5 Addressing Health Outcomes

In 1986 a report of the Aboriginal Task Force extensively interviewed Aboriginal people throughout Australia and found housing conditions poor. The findings included:

- chronic shortages of housing,
- design and size inappropriate to Aboriginal culture,
- poor or non-existent maintenance,
- long waiting lists for public housing and
- after housing poverty (Daylight & Johnstone 1986).

In 1987, the Housing Needs Survey (Jones 1994) highlighted the need for additional dwellings to alleviate crowded and substandard conditions (ATSIC 1991). In 1989, the National Aboriginal Health Strategy (NAHS) concurred with the Jones Report and additional programs were implemented to improve the living conditions in urban, rural and remote communities. The Community Health Infrastructure Program (CHIP) commenced by combining two programs administered by the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs, to provide supplementary funding to ...accelerate provision of basic services and facilities (Commonwealth of Australia 1996, p.121).

As part of NAHS initiatives, the Health Infrastructure Priority Program (HIPP)³³ was launched to provide infrastructure, capital works and housing to remote localities. This program was administered by ATSIC and gave an additional source of housing from State housing authorities. Funding for capital works for the construction of housing and infrastructure came from several areas;

- the Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP) funded and administered through ATSIC,
- the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program (ARHP) funded under the CSHA and administered by Aboriginal Housing Unit (now AHA),
- the National Aboriginal Health Strategy managed by ATSIC and
- regional council funding administered by ATSIC regional offices.

Some discrepancies with overlap between the ATSIC projects and state public housing programs occurred in certain areas. In New South Wales, one community was provided with housing from NAHS costing \$240,000 on one side of the street and state housing authority housing costing \$60,000 on the other³⁴ (Stewart pers. comm.).

Public housing incentives became increasingly focussed on improving health outcomes, through NAHS and other environmental and public health reviews (Figure 10). The modification of some cultural practices and behaviour were suggested in these reports.

Examples included :

- visitor obligation
- the role of the head of the household or 'tenant' and
- control of children. (Dept of Lands and Housing (NT) 1991, p.20)

A drive for consistent healthy housing in remote areas in South Australia emerged as a result of the health emphasis. Tender processes were designed to enable the delivery of cost effective and uniform housing to remote communities (Aboriginal Housing Authority 1999). Supervision processes were initiated to oversee building work in communities to diminish the levels of sub-standard work. The tendering process revealed the cost effectiveness of the first prefabricated housing now currently used in remote areas of South Australia (Figure 11).

1.6.6 More Reports

The National Housing Strategy was announced in 1990 and aimed to develop a program of housing reform

....ensuring all Australians have access to quality housing which is appropriate to their needs at different times of their lives, which is well located in relation to employment opportunities, transport and other services, and which is obtainable at an affordable price.

(Commonwealth of Australia 1992, p.aiix)

Additional calls for improved outcomes in Aboriginal housing were made in the findings of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal deaths in Custody (Dept of Lands and Housing (NT) 1991). The report was released in 1991 and among the 339 recommendations was the statement that housing is

...inadequate and culturally inappropriate.

(Dept of Lands and Housing (NT) 1991)

The Royal Commission also emphasised the importance of applying the principle of self-determination.

These reports reiterated the health emphasis on housing in remote South Australia. The tendering process had clearly identified pre-fabricated housing types as a cost-effective measure for housing and further measures were taken to ensure standards of building. A Standards Forum

...was developed in 1992 in an effort to address the problems caused by consultants, builders and other well meaning people inexperienced in the area of providing appropriate, sustainable, low maintenance housing.

(Aboriginal Housing Authority 1999, s.8 p.1)

The Standards Forum developed specifications for housing in remote South Australia built by the then Aboriginal Housing Unit. ATSIC projects did not have to abide by the specifications and some discrepancies in building standards occurred between ATSIC funded projects and those built on the instigation of the Aboriginal Housing Unit. The housing built by the Aboriginal Housing Unit continued emphasis towards uniformity and the use of a model whilst ATSIC funded projects had differing approaches instigated by the communities.

The reconciliation process fostered a number of organisations to review their status in relation to indigenous matters and in particular the provision of public housing. One

organisation, the National Community Housing Forum³⁵, issued a statement of apology and commitment to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders. Part of the statement read

We acknowledge that inappropriate housing and infrastructure policies and programs have significantly contributed to the severe disadvantages suffered by Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders today. (National Community Housing Forum 1998, p.1)

1.6.7 Establishment of Indigenous Land Corporation

The Homelands Movement continued in land title areas of South Australia (i.e. AP Lands and Maralinga Tjarutja) during the late 1980s. The Fringe Dwellers Program, administered by the Aboriginal Housing Unit was restructured into the Homelands and Community Housing Program in 1992 to enable housing to be built in these areas (SAHT 1992b). The passing of the *Native Title Act 1993*, in the House of Representatives made way for the *Indigenous Land Corporation and Land Fund Bill 1994*. The Bill established the Indigenous Land Corporation to administer a ten year budget for the purchase and management of land for traditional owners (ATSIC 1994). In South Australia, the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) purchases homelands for family groups, who could then apply for housing. This has placed further demand on the construction of new housing. The housing applicants must qualify for housing under certain criteria, the primary being the existence of potable water and services³⁶, and secure tenure. The establishment of the ILC led to homelands being established in more rural areas (versus remote) and ensured that tenure was guaranteed. It also meant that options were available for people wishing to live within their traditional land but desiring an alternative choice from community based living.

Current homelands throughout South Australia vary greatly in size and facilities. They range from areas of land with no facilities which may be inhabited infrequently to homelands such as Scotdesco located between Ceduna and Yalata. Scotdesco Community Inc. runs a CDEP program employing 76 family members, has its own TAFE and Women's Arts and Craft group (Scott pers. comm.).

Homelands have potential self-determinative abilities in that it's members are able to determine who resides within them and occupancy may normally be confined to kin.

1.7 SELF MANAGEMENT

In 1998 there was an official shift from self determination to 'self empowerment' or 'self management'³⁷. The first reported instance in the context of the Government's position was by the Foreign Minister³⁸ in a document wherein he stated:

...it might be better to use the term self-management rather than leaving the impression that we are prepared to have a separate indigenous state... (ATSIC 1999c, s.9)

This withdrawal of support for self determination may mean approaches to housing increasingly focus on cost-effective measures which may not address the specific needs of Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people predominantly live in different areas, travel to different destinations and have different agendas and issues from non-Aboriginal Australia. In theory, it takes away the right to promote and fund different agendas.

From the National Housing Strategy, the Commonwealth released a position paper entitled National Indigenous Housing Strategy (NIHS). It suggested a series of reforms leading to Aboriginal housing becoming again a predominantly state or territory responsibility. The Commonwealth set out to negotiate agreements with each of the individual States and Territories to avoid the duplication of services by Commonwealth and state.

1.8 THE PRESENT SITUATION

1.8.1 Bilateral Agreements

The bilateral agreements negotiated with State and Territory governments aim

...to maximise program efficiency and effectiveness and to better coordinate the two indigenous-specific housing programs. (ATSIC 1998a, p.113)

The Commonwealth has negotiated to pass responsibility for the service provision and management of housing to the States (Porter 1996), which has resulted in the formation of the Aboriginal Housing Authority in South Australia (Aboriginal Housing Authority 1999). The Aboriginal Housing Unit restructured to become a separate entity under the

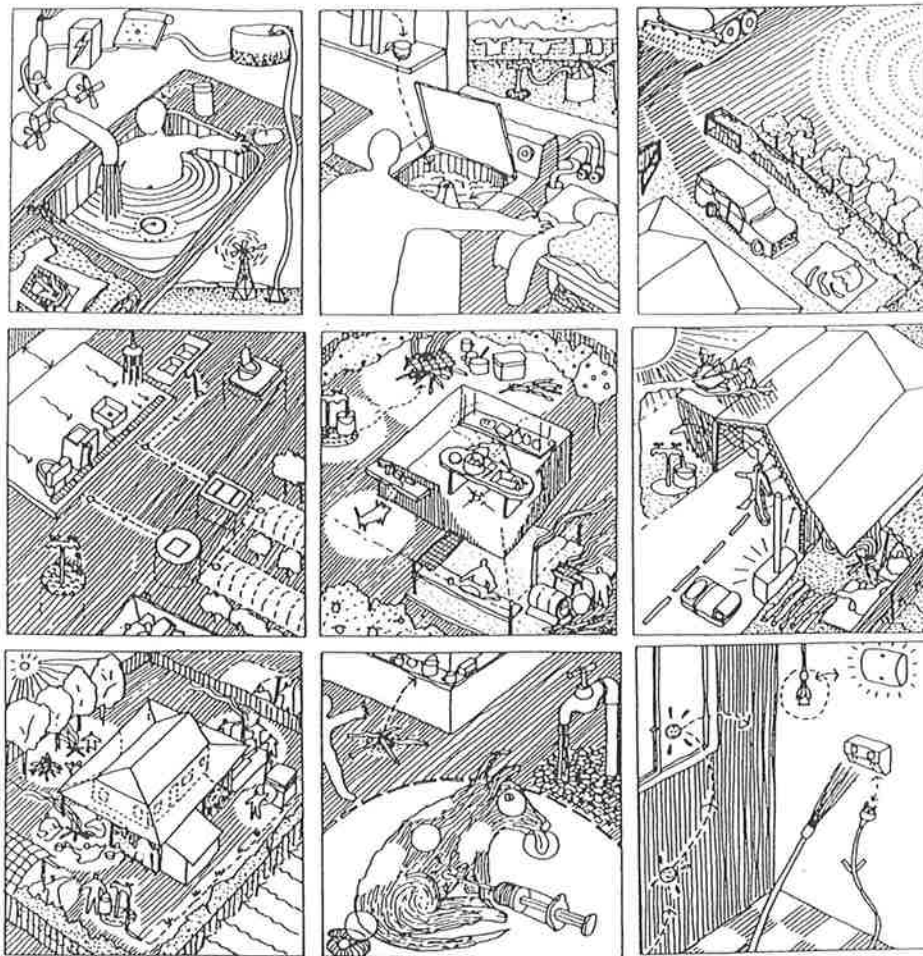


FIGURE 10 Nine 'Health Hardware for Healthy Living Practices'

As suggested by the Report of Uwankara Palyanyku Kanyintjaku . Rather than proposing 'model' Aboriginal housing, the report suggested principles by which any community building (housing or public utility) should be constructed. The nine factors were :

- washing facilities for people
- washing of clothes and bedding,
- waste removal,
- nutrition,
- reduce crowding,
- separation of dogs and children,
- dust control,
- temperature control, and
- reduce trauma.

A variety of design features target community design, house planning and adaptation of technology to achieve these aims.

source : Nganampa Health Council Inc et al., 1987

Human Services portfolio rather than a sub-unit of the South Australian Housing Trust. It is anticipated that the Authority will be fully operational in the next twelve months (Cooper pers. comm.) and will be responsible for the housing component of CHIP funding. ATSIC under this arrangement will not run an alternate housing program.

1.8.2 Current Focuses of Housing

The major focus of housing at this stage appears to continue as a provider of improved health outcomes. Other needs in the communities, such as providing employment opportunities (CDEP) in construction and on-going management and maintenance programs, are targeted as part of housing programs. Literature continues to look at poor housing as a factor for a multitude of social problems and the provision of housing as a method of correcting social ills. Housing has continually been targeted as a method of achieving this. Coombs addressed this issue in 1987 when he stated that

Australian governments have since 1967 (seen) housing as central to their policies and have had extravagant expectations of its social benefits. It is doubtful whether those policies adequately reflect Aboriginal values and how far those expectations are being realised...

(Coombs in Ross 1987, p.xii).

The house has rarely been seen as a place 'just for living'³⁹ and a home, by the policy makers responsible for public housing.

1.8.3 Current Housing

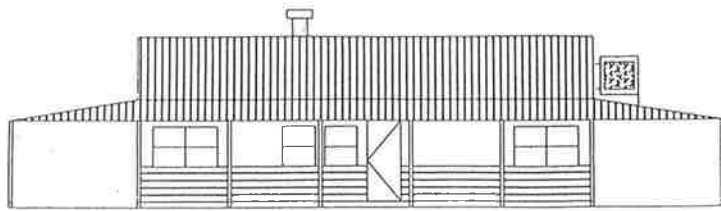
Existing housing stock in remote South Australia consists of various examples and phototypes constructed since self determination. Much of the existing stock tends to be sub-standard (below standards required by other housing authorities such as the South Australian Housing Trust) (Jackson pers. comm.). Due to acute housing need, rebuilds are performed on existing housing stock in attempts to bring them within remote specifications.

Communities, as the owners of the completed housing choose the housing type, placement and timing for new housing, although all of these items are also controlled by funding

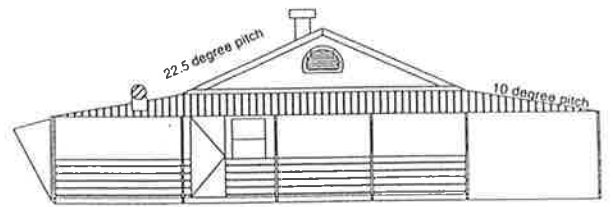
levels and cycles as determined by government processes. The Aboriginal Housing Authority acts as the service provider to the communities, providing the expertise and centralised administration for the construction of housing. All decisions of the Aboriginal Housing Authority are controlled by the AHA Board, which meets on a monthly basis. Housing provided to communities must be within specifications developed for remote communities by the Standards Forum in consultation with the Aboriginal Housing Authority. Most remote communities have chosen to use pre-fabricated housing (Figure 11), as it conforms to the remote specifications and has been developed by the AHA as a model for use in remote areas in South Australia. Remote housing is let to tender in block units for cost efficiency. The movement of the housing component of CHIP from ATSIC to AHA means that the adoption of this model for housing throughout remote areas is likely to continue.

The prefabricated model generally chosen was developed initially for use in the AP Lands (i.e. Nomadic Housing)(Figures 10 &11). It is generally built with two or three bedrooms and living, kitchen and dining space. The housing is constructed using colorbond walls (visual dado line externally) and roof. A verandah area approximately 3.0m wide with concreted entry points surrounds the house. Other areas of the verandah are not concreted to allow for sleeping outside. Part of the verandah is secured with wire netting or reinforcing mesh. An ablution area divided into toilet, laundry/washbowl areas and shower areas adjoins the rear of the building. The separation of the ablution from the house avoids the risks of water contamination to the house and allows the ablution block to be used by family members camping near the house.

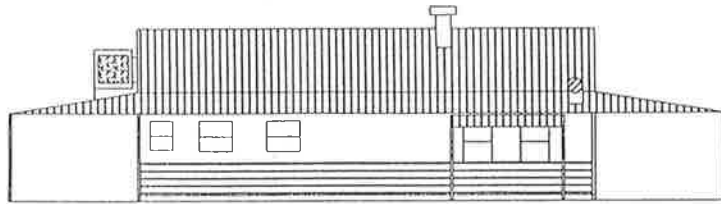
Management of housing stock becomes the responsibility of the housing management committee on completion. Housing management committees are now formed in most communities from the initiatives of the Labor Government at the advent of self determination. Technical support and direction to these committees are also provided by the AHA.



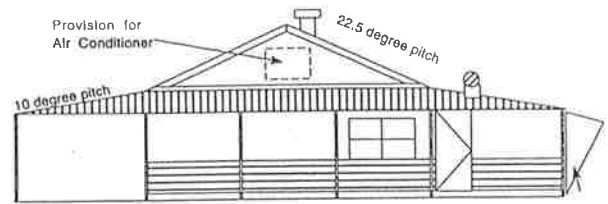
FRONT - ELEVATION ONE



SIDE - ELEVATION TWO



REAR - ELEVATION THREE



SIDE - ELEVATION FOUR

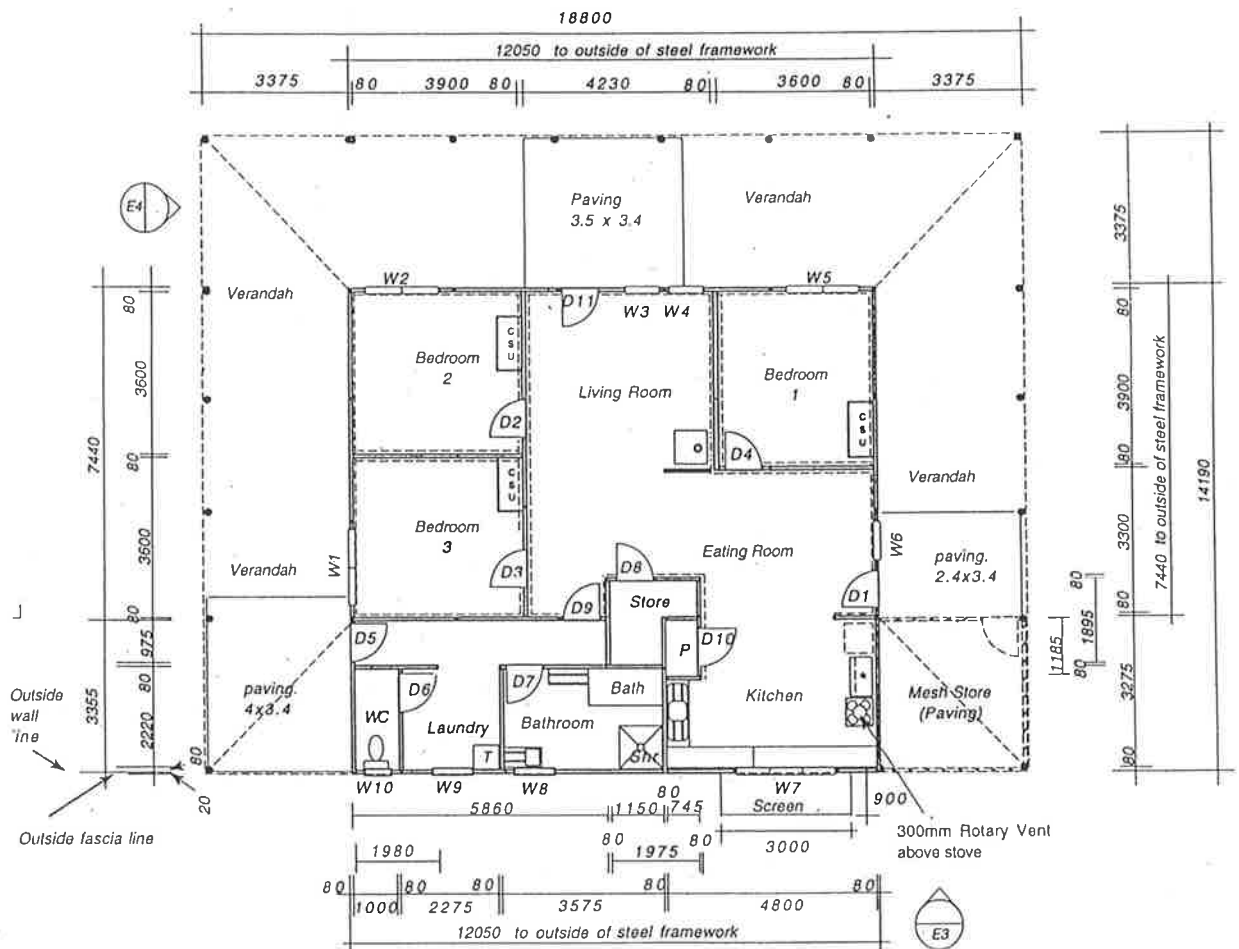


FIGURE 11

Plan : Housing awarded the 1999 Tender for Remote Areas of South Australia

source : Rosenzweig 1999



FIGURE 12 **Nomadic Housing Constructed at Yalata Aboriginal Community**

Housing supplied by Nomadic Enterprises and constructed through the Aboriginal Housing Authority processes. In some remote areas brick is used for portions of the lower external walls to provide further durability and stability for users leaning against the structure.

The Nomadic models have developed from early prefabricated non-serviced one or two roomed houses supplied in 1970s to current models. Floor layouts are conventional with specific adaptations for climatic and environmental conditions in remote Aboriginal communities.

The emphasis of government bodies in the provision of public housing in remote South Australia continues to be improved health outcomes. Within this emphasis housing tends to concentrate on the performance of entry/ exit points of water/waste and the location of wet areas. Low maintenance and durability are also key elements in building design.

1.9 THE RESEARCH BASE

Through the brief history of Aboriginal housing it can be seen that some issues of appropriate housing have only recently been addressed by public housing funding bodies. Calls from various bodies including a Royal Commission, research and other reports instigated by Aboriginal people have highlighted culturally appropriate housing as a prime concern. A review of current literature and examples will identify issues of culturally appropriate housing. The case study in remote South Australia will provide a discourse on these elements and an evaluation of housing in regard to the noted elements. Adaptations of housing to specific environments are also imperative to ascertain housing performance. There are elements of living in a remote locality which do not transpose to other rural or urban environments. Elements of living in a remote Aboriginal community will also be identified from a literature review and these will be checked against the case study area in remote South Australia.

¹ Given that all communities live on communal land, private investment into construction of housing by an individual residents is not usual.

² Wiltja and Yuu are Pitjantjatjara words for these shelters. Wurley and ngowanhi are among other terms used for the same structures in South Australia. Wiltja will be used throughout the document as it relates to the language at the case study.

³ Author's emphasis.

⁴ Housing depended on individual factors such as availability at the settlement, funding, sex and whether an Aboriginal person was classified 'half-Aboriginal' or a 'full-blood'.

⁵ The chief motivation in providing separate accommodation for children is expressed in this excerpt from a

1842 report by Moorhouse (the South Australian 'Protector' of Aborigines). It states:

...our chief hope is decidedly in the children; and the complete success as far as regards their education and civilisation would be before us; if it were possible to remove them from the influence of their parents... (Moorhouse in Hall 1997, p.4)

⁶ The assimilation policy concerning 'full-blood' Aboriginal people was mainly influenced by anthropologists who recognised the ability to study Aboriginal practices and customs without non-Aboriginal influence was to be of a limited time frame (Griffiths 1995). The desire for anthropological data led to the promotion of reserves and missions as restricted access areas to non-Aboriginal people and virtual prisons for Aboriginal people.

⁷ At the instigation of the Aboriginal Protection Board.

⁸ The inclusion of Aboriginal people into the mainstream South Australian Housing Trust program was the beginning of the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program (ARHP) now administered by the Aboriginal Housing Authority. This program broke away from the mainstream public rental program run by South Australian Housing Trust in the early 70s and still operates in urban areas and rural towns.

⁹ In reality most went back to former living conditions which were infinitely more comfortable.

¹⁰ Ross uses the terminology for the Stage One housing as Number One, Reserve Type 1 dwelling and Number One, Reserve Type 111 house. These houses are constructed of the same materials and of the same floor plans of those described as Stage One and Three by Heppell (1972).

¹¹ At this time Aboriginal people were not asked for their opinions on matters such as these. Their role in society was to accept housing and to be grateful. Therefore no documentation exists giving Aboriginal impressions of housing for the period.

¹² It was generally assumed that the last desert Aboriginals to 'come in' did so in the 1950's (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Housing Panel Inc 1977).

¹³ The Aboriginal people inhabiting these camps were known as 'fringe dwellers'.

¹⁴ The Labor conference in Launceston exhibited for the first time Labor's self determination policy for Aboriginal people. The Labor party did not take office until the 1972 elections with Gough Whitlam as Prime Minister.

¹⁵ Outside contractors often charged excessive amounts for housing and used sub-standard materials and construction methods.

¹⁶ Given a lack of building training in communities at the time, construction techniques were often sub-standard and communities were often excessively charged for materials. Some projects were never completed under this method.

¹⁷ Transportable housing and former offices were bought and transported to communities as a method of providing 'instant' housing. The transportables were often structurally unsound or constructed of unsuitable materials. Some communities still use the one or two roomed transportables as housing. Recently, the author observed a family numbering 11 living in a one roomed transportable without ablution or cooking facilities. The writer also observed a transportable housing clearly marked with asbestos stickers deteriorating in a community. The community did not have the funding to remove it.

¹⁸ Design professionals inexperienced with Aboriginal people led to inappropriate housing being constructed, as

outlined later.

19 Much of the housing stock currently held by the Aboriginal Housing Authority was constructed during this period. The consequences of this program led to much of the current housing stock being substandard (Jackson pers. comm.) and requiring 'rebuilt' to meet standards similar to those of the South Australian Housing Trust.

20 Australian New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science.

21 Cladding materials included cordex and nylex.

22 Trials indicated 9°C difference between canvas covered James wiltja and a traditional wiltja. (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Panel 1977).

23 The writer attempted without success to find photographic evidence or plans of Knox's organic house (even though the architect publishes extensively). Note the titling of houses in literature relates to the architect not the person who commissioned the work which is an interesting deviation from normal architectural convention.

24 Whilst the verandah has become a standard feature of remote Aboriginal housing only floor areas are concreted to allow more comfortable exterior sleeping areas and to reduce cost.

25 Especially with the wall panels and ceiling tiles.

26 The house during summer recorded internal temperatures 10 degrees higher than the exterior (similar to transitional housing) and during winter was cold. The coldness was exacerbated by the occupants lack of furniture and the absence of any floor coverings (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Panel 1977).

27 In this period there was severe movement in line with self determination policies to have Aboriginal people running their own affairs. This eliminated a considerable amount of design expertise from the panel.

28 The living conditions in many remote communities were appalling, frequently without running water, electricity or other services.

29 At the time Secretary of the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

30 This report was the first in several in the period 1976 - 1999, which led to reforms being made in the provision of public housing to Aboriginal people. These reforms would eventually lead to the States and Territories taking control of programs from the Commonwealth. In South Australia, this has meant the formation of the Aboriginal Housing Authority, a separate entity under the Human Services portfolio.

31 Alternative spelling.

32 Communities involved in this program were Yalata Big Camp, Hamilton Station, Half Way Camp at Ceduna and Davenport. Southern communities were serviced by Aboriginal Development Corporation (now ATSIC) (AHA 1999).

33 The Health Infrastructure Priority Programs (HIPP) was an incentive which arose from the National Aboriginal Health Strategy. Further details of the programs which are used in the case study area will be outlined in Section 5.

34 One useful aspect of the existence of two separate programs was the ability to create disparity between the two programs to focus on inadequacy of housing programs in some instances (Memmott pers. comm.).

35 The National Community Forum is made up of the following organisations:

Association to Resource Co-operative Housing

Ecumenical Housing Inc

Centacare Australia	National Shelter
Churches Community Housing Inc	National Youth Coalition for Housing
Community Housing Coalition of Western Australia	N.S.W. Federation of Housing Associations
Community Housing Council of South Australia	Queensland Community Housing Coalition
Community Housing Federation of Australia	Tasmanian Co-operative Housing Development Society
Community Housing Federation of Victoria	Women's Emergency Services Network

³⁶ Funding for the initial establishment of homelands can be obtained from various ATSI funding programs.

The process of establishing a homelands in the AP Lands is laid out in policy (Anon u.k.).

³⁷ The terms self empowerment and self management have no basis in political theory or international law (ATSI 1999c).

³⁸ Reported in the context of the government's position on UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (ATSI 1999c).

³⁹ This is the title of Ross's study into Aboriginal perception of housing in north-west Australia.



SECTION 2

METHODOLOGY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0.1 The Subject Matter

The choice of subject material for this dissertation caused some debate among peers when proposed. Some argued that it was not 'environmental issue' and therefore did not fit within the framework of environmental studies. According to Doyle and Kellow:

...there is no unanimity over what the expression 'environmental problem' includes.

(Doyle and Kellow. 1995, p.32)

A study of remote Aboriginal housing contains the features which are consistent with environmental issues. Doyle and Kellow (1995) identify a number of common factors which are distinctive in environmental issues, including:

- a holistic approach,
- a complexity of issues, and
- the subject matter embodies a contestation of dominant materialistic values of modern society by others with alternate post materialistic value sets.

The writer argues that the chosen subject matter contains all of these elements and will endeavour in the process of the dissertation to illustrate this.

The holistic approach used in environmental studies requires that the methodology draw from a variety of fields, some of which were new to the writer. Given the inexperience of the writer in indigenous affairs, it seemed important to give serious consideration to areas such as:

- the type of language,
- the use of terms,
- ethical considerations, and

- protocol considerations.

2.1 USE OF TERMS AND LANGUAGE

2.1.1 The Type of Language

Language used in Aboriginal literature can be negative in form and tone. For example, damage to buildings is often referred to as 'vandalism' or the use of alcohol becomes 'substance abuse'. The writer felt that the use of these terms often out of context implied judgements of dominant non-Aboriginal society upon Aboriginal society. There has been a conscious decision to abstain from this style of language in the text.

2.1.2 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal

The use of different terms in indigenous studies is a matter for continual debate. Terms come and go and within this dissertation it has been decided to follow the existing trends in current academic literature. Different terms have been given to or used by indigenous populations. The use of a generic Aboriginal term (e.g. nunga, koori) to describe populations was seen by the writer to be self-defeating, as they were often used out of context. After careful consideration the researcher has chosen the terms Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal to distinguish between the two different populations of Australia. The core of the dissertation has the theme of Aboriginal housing and anything outside this circle will automatically become 'non'. Other terms used in the current literature to describe non-Aboriginal Australians, such as 'Euro-Australians', 'settler Australians', 'whites' to name a few, are not considered useful. The writer is also aware of the current trend in academic literature of the resurgence of the term 'Aborigines' as a plural term for Aboriginal people, but has chosen not to use this term.

2.1.3 Place Names

Often the names of communities and homelands throughout South Australia have had different names for Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. During the last decade, the Aboriginal names have begun to appear in academic literature. The writer will use the

place names used by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs (DEHAA), as these appear to be used in consultation with the Aboriginal communities concerned. The previous name that the settlement was known by will appear in brackets in the first instance it is mentioned in the text, e.g. Iwantja (Indulkana).

2.2 ETHICAL AND PROTOCOL CONSIDERATIONS

This study is subject to the guidelines set down by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Adelaide. An ethics approval⁴⁰ was sought and successfully obtained from this committee on the 22nd March 1999. As the ethical and protocol guidelines set down by the University were not specific to Aboriginal research it has been decided to adopt the guidelines as set down in Crawford's 'Jalinardi Ways' (1989) (Appendix 3).

2.3 THE CASE STUDY AREA

The case study area was chosen from numerous Aboriginal communities in remote South Australia. Oak Valley was chosen for a number of reasons. These are as follows:

- it is a very remote locality,
- the community has shown resilience and determination to settle Oak Valley on a permanent basis,
- permanent settlement is recent,
- housing examples are recent,
- housing initiatives have been unusual,
- the community is an alcohol free area⁴¹,
- it has been serviced by both ATSIC and Aboriginal Housing Authority housing programs,
- it was part of the ATSIC-Army Community Assistance Program, and
- there are representative environmental challenges to living at the community.

2.4 METHODOLOGY

The process for the completion of this study can be seen by the flow chart (Figure 13).

The methodology was separated into three separate area:

- literature and document review,
- field visits, and
- a review process.

2.4.1 Literature Review.

One major method of collecting data was a literature review around several themes:

- collating background information on Aboriginal remote housing in South Australia,
- a background of government policy which directly affects housing,
- cultural factors which can influence housing,
- environmental housing issues in arid areas,
- specific examples of Aboriginal housing, and
- discourse and critique of Aboriginal housing.

2.4.2 Field Work

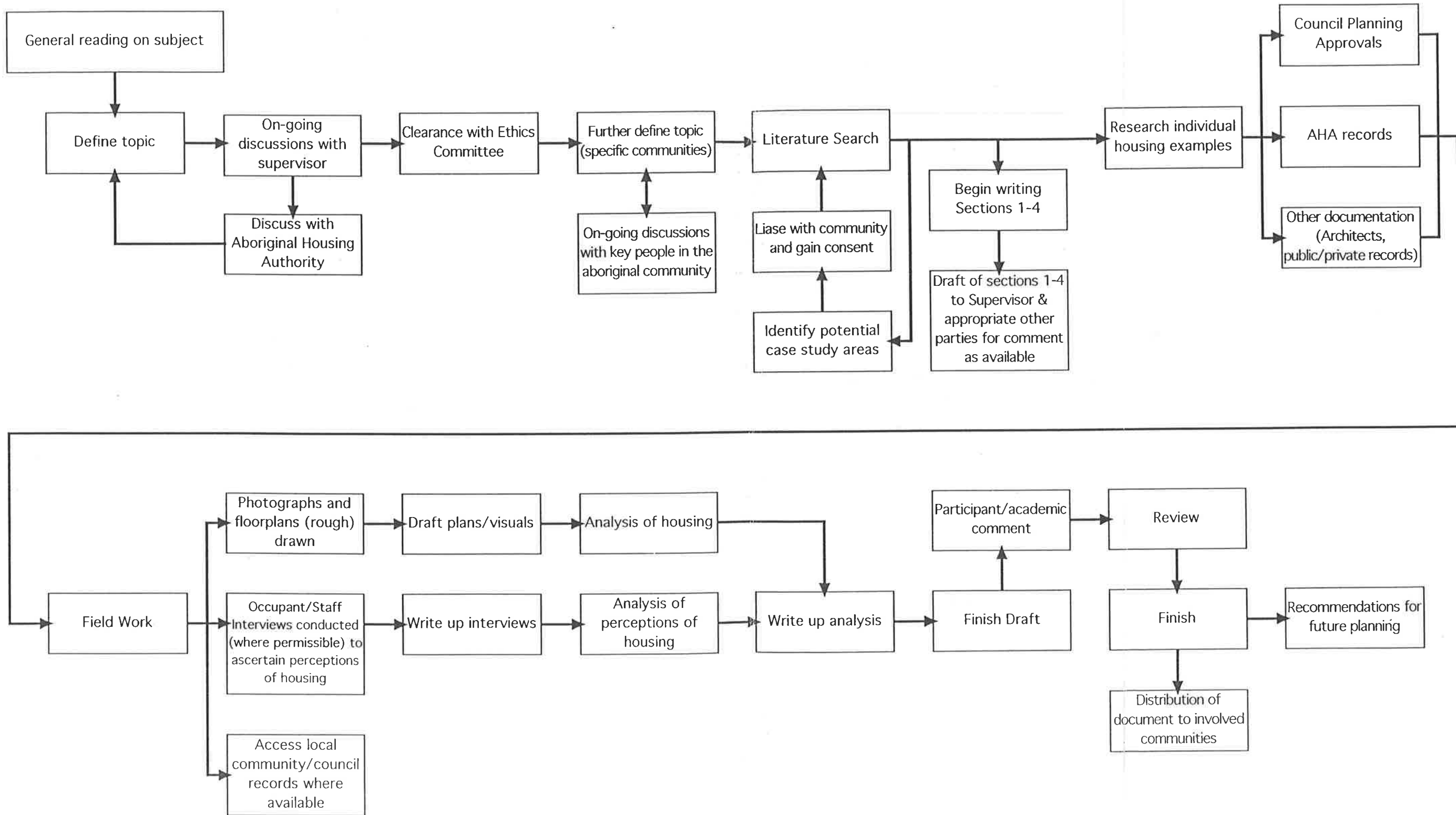
The major part of the field work was be conducted using a variety of methods and was divided into two separate areas being:

- the gathering of photographic evidence and
- interviewing people.

The field work methods drew on a variety of different disciplines. Ethnological and sociological approaches of gathering information by observation of participants was used. An emic⁴² approach could not be used due to the time constraints so the researcher took a etic⁴³ approach. Architectural critique was also be used. With this variety of interdisciplinary techniques, it is hoped that a holistic viewpoint was achieved.

As the dissertation was bound by critical time frames and the subject base was large, the

FIGURE 13 : Methodology Flow Chart.



interviewer approached the study as an outsider with background information to gain an insider's view. There are limitations to taking this approach, given that participants of the interviews could be less likely to give true and accurate views of their perceptions due to lack of familiarity with the interviewer. Travel in some instances was conducted in conjunction with the Aboriginal Housing Authority which gave insight into some of the technical aspects of housing.

2.4.3 Initial Contacts

Correspondence was sent to the chairperson of the land holding body⁴⁴ giving details of the research. This was followed up by personal contact to the chairperson seeking permission. with information sheets⁴⁵ for public display and distribution, outlining :

- researcher and contact details,
- the nature of the project,
- what will be expected from them,
- length of time required, and
- possible outcomes of the project.

2.4.4 Priorities

As mentioned before, field visits had two constraints for the researcher. Firstly, there was a short time frame⁴⁶ to conduct visits and a reliance on the Aboriginal Housing Authority for transportation and introduction in some areas. It was important to outline priorities given the tight time frames. It was decided to give precedence to providing documentary evidence of housing types over interviewing participants for satisfaction and perception levels. Within the researcher's personally instituted ethical guidelines⁴⁷, consideration was given to the concept of 'not intruding in the community' and this resulted in the field work extending over a large period of time and in some instances, is incomplete. These gaps are mentioned in the results.

2.4.5 Photographic Evidence

Photographs of housing are used to show the different types of housing which has been constructed during different periods. Some photographs have been taken by the various Housing Authorities and Committees. In the absence of current examples of housing types, these have been used and acknowledged. All other photography is by the writer.

Photographs were only taken of the exterior of the building and to maintain continuity the major access point into the dwelling constituted the central part of the frame wherever possible. Due to time constraints it was not possible to maintain background continuity through similar sky conditions throughout the photographic results but, given the short time in which photographic evidence was obtained (August to September) clear skies with slight cloud cover was experienced. No photographs in the document include people and the researcher was aware of the need to be careful of the background of photographs in reference to significant land forms or places.

2.4.6 Interviews

It was anticipated prior to the field work that informal interviews using a proforma interview guide would be used and that only occupants would be interviewed. In reality the interviews were far less structured. After initially trialing a loosely structured interview with several people, there were a number of considerations which indicated this process would not be effective. Some of these issues were:

- language barriers between the interviewees and interviewer,
- the removal of yes/no responses from the interview process, and
- the manner in which information is transmitted in Aboriginal society.

It was decided after these early experiences that a less formal and less scientific approach needed to be taken. Often the occupant of the house was not present and would not be able to be interviewed but other people living at the house were happy to discuss housing issues. The interview process changed to a more active process where a great number of

issues were discussed. Interviews were also conducted with non-Aboriginal people working in the communities. Due to distance constraints a number of interviews were conducted on the telephone or outside the case study area.

2.4.7 The Review Process

It was anticipated that an active review process be completed with the community at the completion of the study. This was not possible due to the academic nature and time constraints of the study. Review has occurred through the participation of several senior members of the Aboriginal community and other people involved in the field (noted in the acknowledgments).

It is imperative that information from this study be returned to the community and participating bodies. The documentation will be forwarded to the Maralinga Tjarutja, Aboriginal Housing Authority and ATSIC on completion.

2.5 DISCUSSION

There were a number of issues with the methodology which warrant discussion within the context of the study.

2.5.1 Choice of Case Study Area

The choice of Oak Valley as the case study retrospectively may not have been the most appropriate nor most representative in terms of South Australian Aboriginal communities.

The community is the most isolated from other communities in South Australia and major delays in the provision of housing means the lack of other housing stock being in place. The community does not have a direct history of housing associated with the influence of missionaries unlike many other South Australian communities. The community also has made decisions regarding housing which relate directly back to water availability.

2.5.2 Transference of Information

At the outset of the study it was assumed that the residents of Oak Valley would constitute the case study subjects and that information sheets would be supplied to them during the interview process. It was assumed prior to the study that the information could be understood by the people at Oak Valley. In the course of the research it became evident that written English may be not readily understood and information sheets had to be verbally transmitted.

An inter-personal difficulty with a staff member at the Aboriginal Housing Authority indicated that in one instance a particular staff member may have considered themselves to be under scrutiny. It had been assumed by the writer that information in regard to the research would be handed down from management to staff and in the course of the interchange it became evident that information relating to the study may not have been transmitted .

Aboriginal organisations operate with a great deal more informality than those in non-Aboriginal sectors. The writer in this instance suggests that the difficulty may have been related to a lack of knowledge, and information sheets should have issued to all participants. Additionally it should have been recognised that the participant group extended beyond the scope of residents within the case study area. Immediately after the difficult encounter, information sheets were issued to all interviewed people prior to any exchange of information.

2.5.3 Subjective Nature of the Results

At the onset of the study it was thought that measurements would be taken to calculate the performance of housing at Oak Valley. During the first visit to the community it was realised that this would not be possible for a number of reasons:

- the time period was not sufficient,
- base data does not exist for comparison⁴⁸, and

- measurement techniques do not exist for some conditions⁴⁸

The writer is aware of the limitations of using the study under these conditions.

2.5.4 Length of Study

A physical limitation of the dissertation was given at the onset of the research period of which the writer was aware. During the process of the study it became apparent that this length would be exceeded. One possible method of reducing the length was the removal of contextual information. The writer decided not to pursue this option, as it was thought that this information was critical to the holistic picture of remote housing at Oak Valley. Additionally given the assumption that the reader of the dissertation was to be 'an educated layperson' (Doyle pers. comm.) this information was considered vital.

Another option for reducing the length of the work was to manipulate the aims and change the scope of the work. This decision was not taken due to the involvement of the various parties and the writer's perceived commitments to them. Therefore the work stands at a greater length than originally envisaged.

⁴⁰ see Appendix 2.

⁴¹ Whilst this was not a definitive factor, it was thought that the interviewer's inexperience would be helped through this aspect.

⁴² The terms 'emic' and 'etic' come from the branch of anthropology called cognitive anthropology as researched by Kenneth Pike. The terms relate back to linguistics and the two terms, phonemics (study of meaning) and phonetics (study of sound). Emic and etic approaches are anthropological field work techniques. An emic approach is where the researcher directly participates in the culture being studied (normally by living within the culture). An etic approach is one where the researcher does not participate in the culture being studied, but rather takes the role of detached educated layman (Ericson and Murphy 1998).

⁴³ see above

⁴⁴ see Appendix 5.

⁴⁵ see Appendix 4.

⁴⁶ see Appendix 3.

⁴⁷ One example of this is the inability to compare temperature measurements of housing against thermal

comfort zones of the occupants, as thermal comfort zones for Aboriginal people in remote areas have not been measured.

⁴⁸ It is impossible to measure environmental conditions such as dust control in housing as it is dependent on the occupants' use of housing.



SECTION 3

CULTURAL FACTORS INFLUENCING HOUSING

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Aboriginal cultures are vastly different to that of non-Aboriginal Australians yet the models of housing instituted in public housing have almost always been based on the non-Aboriginal house⁴⁹ models. The provision of non-Aboriginal housing has highlighted these cultural differences to both the occupants and the structures. The provision of non-Aboriginal housing has often resulted in

- damage to the housing⁵⁰,
- chronic overcrowding, and
- the eventual destruction of housing.

It has also had a detrimental effect on the occupants by:

- changing visual and auditory horizons⁵¹ (Ross 1987),
- increase in kinship obligations (Crawford 1989),
- reduction in social group time,
- changes in group dynamics, and
- changing lifestyles.

There is an active relationship between culture and housing. Housing provides a tangible background with physical constraints in which the culture of the inhabitants evolves, and culture determines how a physical environment is used. It is important to look at culture and the implications of placing people in culturally inappropriate housing. From this examination of cultural impacts on housing and occupants a number of factors emerge which can be used to assess the housing built in the case study area.

3.1 THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE

Culture broadly stated means 'ways of life' and more thoroughly:

Culture consists of the abstract values, beliefs and perceptions of the world that lie behind people's behaviour, which are reflected in their behaviour. These are shared by members of a society, and acted upon, they produce behaviour considered acceptable within the society.

(Goodenough 1971, p.22)

Culture is not static, it exists in order to deal with problems and must satisfy the basic needs of those who live by its rules. Given that life and circumstances are continually changing a culture must have the

...capacity to change in order to adapt to new circumstances or to altered perceptions of existing circumstances. (Haviland 1996, p.420)

Different housing types will affect the behaviour of occupants and vice versa. Housing inappropriate to culture will not survive to serve the occupants. Whilst viewing Aboriginal culture in this context can only be limited and generalised it is important to look at generalised aspects⁵² of Aboriginal culture which affect housing and its occupants.

3.1.1 Myth Of Homogeneity

Within this study it is imperative to note that culture is not homogenous to all Aboriginal people. There are vast variations in Aboriginal culture and practices throughout

Australia. Groome (1995) noted:

...there is not now, and never has been, one Aboriginal culture in Australia. Aboriginal people, especially young Aboriginals are living out an extremely wide range of cultural patterns and styles, often having a repertoire of several models available at any given time. Furthermore each individual will change these cultural styles frequently as they seek to achieve cultural authenticity. (Groome 1995, p.7)

Therefore any studies into cultural factors influencing will be housing incorrect or not applicable in many instances.

3.2 THE NATURE OF ABORIGINAL CULTURE

Being Aboriginal is not about skin colour. It is a complex system of viewing the world which establishes an individual's Aboriginality. Each society presents a world view which the members of the society take for granted. A dominant paradigm is rarely

	non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be added to. • Emphasis on extending the frontiers of knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predetermined, laid down in The Dreaming: change can be accommodated by re-interpretation of The Dreaming by the Elders.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starts at a specified age. • Occurs at institutions. • Named as separate from other activities. • Teacher role specific. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starts at birth. • Non-institutionalised. • An ongoing part of life and taken for granted. • Teacher role one of many roles.
Individualism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on individual rewards. • Encourages individual responsibility. • Limited family/parental involvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on group security. • Encourages group responsibility. • Maintain family/parental involvement.

TABLE 1 : World Views

source: Crawford 1989

challenged unless it no longer suits its function. Crawford (1989) presents world views from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives (Table 1). It can be seen from this that the Aboriginal perspective the needs of the group and the family are valued beyond those of the individual. There are specific methods of passing knowledge which are pre-determined. To look further at the culture, the common generalised values of Aboriginal cultures can be analysed.

3.3 SOME ABORIGINAL VALUES

Common values appear in most Aboriginal people and their communities. These values are rarely articulated by Aboriginal people⁵³, (Coombs et al. 1983) and have managed to survive many attempts at eradication of Aboriginal culture by non-Aboriginal people and their governments. Strehlow (1956) attributed the survival of Aboriginal communities to these very values and ideals when he stated;

...among the strongest ideals which sustained [them] were the principles of co-operation, not subordination; of differentiation, without inequality; of tolerance for the customs of other people in their own country... (Strehlow 1956, p.11)

Aboriginal value systems can be separated into different components which can be explained separately but interact with each other. Coombs et al (1983) identified a number of Aboriginal values which research had shown to exist universally among Aboriginal communities in different variations. These identified values are:

- physical and spiritual survival,
- respect for the inherent dignity of a human being,
- reciprocity, and
- kinship obligations (Coombs et al. 1983).

Each of these values is interrelated to form values which influence and determine community behaviour. These values and their interrelationships with housing will be examined in more depth.

3.2.1 Physical and Spiritual Survival

Within Aboriginal culture there is no differentiation between physical and spiritual

survival. One is unlikely to occur without the other. The basis for spirituality is the land (Hall 1997) and the centre of all aspects of life. For the Aboriginal people there has been:

...a quest for land first, for without the land there can be no indigenous economy and the (decentralised Aboriginal) cultures will collapse. (Myers 1975)

Aboriginal affinity with land means that perceptions and uses of housing and its surrounding environments are different to non-Aboriginal use. Non-Aboriginal people are likely to see the walls that surround them as the extent of their house. Their concept of home will possibly include the front and rear yards although these are likely only to be used for active recreational purposes or very specific purposes⁵⁴ at certain times. Aboriginal perceptions of space are vastly different (Groome pers. comm.). Firstly the house and area around it will have equal value as recreational/ service space. Outside areas are likely to be used as well as interior areas on a consistent daily basis for

- cooking/eating,
- passive recreational areas,
- active recreational areas, and
- sleeping areas

(Nganampa Health Council Inc et al. 1987).

In non-Aboriginal housing interior and exterior areas are clearly delineated and the imposition of such housing to a lifestyle⁵⁵ which uses internal/external areas differently is difficult for the Aboriginal user.

Apart from having a different concept of what constitutes a 'house', Aboriginal people are likely to site their house with respect to land forms and significant and sacred sites. Given choice, housing is unlikely to be built on significant sites, or in areas that have cultural ties to certain groups. Inappropriate use for housing is therefore less likely.

3.2.2 Respect for the Inherent Dignity of the Human Being

Inherent to Aboriginal social structure is the view that ...a person who shows self-respect and respect for others is considered an adult (Coombs et al. 1983) and quiet and confident people are to be respected. The gaining of adulthood only occurs with age at around thirty years of age. The elders in the community, therefore, become the powerful force being of

age with spiritual knowledge, to whom the rewards are allocated. The allocation of housing⁵⁶ can become difficult in some communities where allocation is based on seniority, rather than need (Butler pers. comm.).

3.2.3 Reciprocity

Reciprocity developed from the system of usufruct. In an usufruct system the community had a pool of implements which were commonly owned and were accessible to those who needed them at particular times (Nicholls pers. comm.). These community implements were in addition to personally owned items. For example the community may have communally shared boomerangs and individuals would have their own hunting implements. Reciprocity is a sharing system where individuals own their own possessions but in return for lending them to someone else, they are given something else.

Obligation to another person through deed does not terminate with one gesture but begins a life long imperative to engage in reciprocal activities with that same person (Coombs et al., 1989). For example, should an Aboriginal person help his friend by giving him a lift into town, the friend is then obliged to that person and vice versa. The sharing concept of reciprocity is a mechanism for free-running relationships and part of the network of the community. It emphasises how, within Aboriginal communities, the needs of the group come before those of the individual.

As sharing is expected behaviour, permission is not often sought prior to the use of an individual's possessions (Brock 1989). Many individuals find it necessary to secure those possessions which they do not want others in the community to use. This has led to development of individual rooms as safe areas to secure possessions. Other possessions in the house then become potential share items. One of the adaptations used in public housing has been the provision of lockable rooms in houses (Butler pers. comm.). In some instances, this has become a desirable housing attribute. Planned communal areas such as lounge rooms and kitchens have been adapted by residents to become lockable areas of the

house.

Reciprocity is also interlinked with kinship obligations and expectations are placed on family members. For example, a child is dependent on the mother until the age of around thirty and then the roles are reversed and the obligations become the child's. More complex relationships occur with extended families. Junior members of the families are expected to share their possessions with senior members of the family and this extends to daily situations. For example a nephew would always offer a cigarette to his uncle if he was partaking. Reciprocity does not diminish if resources are low and there is the expectation to share even if resources are minimal. Acknowledgment for sharing is not expected and Aboriginal languages have no word that can be directly translated as thanks (Crawford 1989).

3.2.4 Kinship Obligations

As part of the Aboriginal world view the needs of the group are seen as paramount over those of the individual. Most community structures operate on the expectations and obligations of the classificatory kinship system (Crawford 1989). To the majority of people who identify themselves as Aboriginal, reciprocity and kinship obligations are expected behaviour. Under this system the whole community is classified into specific relationships with each member. The members know in turn what behaviour is expected from themselves and other members (Crawford 1989). Harmonious living is the ideal but this is often difficult for Aboriginal people living in inflexible non-Aboriginal housing.

The impact of these kinship obligations on those housed in non-Aboriginal housing is often the expectation that they will provide housing for mobile family members. This often results in overcrowding and material damage to the structure. The

traditional obligation to accommodate visiting relatives exacerbates overcrowding and facilities in houses are subjected to inordinate stress.

(Dept of Lands and Housing (NT) 1991, p.11)

Obligations of the householder extend beyond physical shelter to food sharing and material possessions and all objects on the property are

...generally at the disposal to those who occupy the residence. In addition a man is held accountable for whatever social infractions or disputes occur in his house.

(Reser in Heppell 1979, p.88)

Ideally kinship obligations mean that Aboriginal people can survive through the generosity of sharing with relatives during lean times. However kinship obligations can have a detrimental effect on the building and its occupants in many instances.

The disruptive effect on stable Aboriginal households of visitors with drug and alcohol problems is not confined to Aboriginals but is exacerbated by kinship ties. Single mothers are particularly vulnerable to having their housing disrupted by unwelcome visitors who may abuse the kinship structure and cause problems with neighbours and damage to houses.

(Scott 1985, p.44)

Kinship obligations mean that overcrowding in Aboriginal housing is a constant reality. In a 1987 environmental and health review within Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands, (Nganampa Council Inc et al. 1987) an average of four people per bedroom was noted. Often verandahs and outdoor areas will also be used for sleeping areas (Groome pers. comm.). High occupancy rates stretch the services of housing to the limit and deterioration of buildings and in particular, plumbing, frequently occur⁵⁷.

3.2.5 Individuality

Whilst it can be seen that the needs of the group come before those of the individual the concept of individuality is nurtured in Aboriginal culture (Coombs et al. 1983).

Tolerance of individuality is limited to expressing oneself rather than exerting knowledge to change lifestyles. In this way eccentricity is tolerated and encouraged, particularly on the part of an older person exerting their individuality, but younger members of the community presenting information from outside sources may be discouraged. Aboriginal communities are intrinsically conservative and change is often rejected.

Given this conservative nature of the individual there comes an inflexibility to change attitudes and gain knowledge to operate housing. Tonkinson 1979 noted that:

...it is important for planners to know that tradition orientated Aborigines are unlikely to alter their habits and begin to behave like Europeans just because they are provided with European-style dwellings. They are much more likely to attempt to 'bend' the new structure to fit in with existing behaviours... (Tonkinson in Heppell 1979, p.198)

Fads in Aboriginal communities are common but are often recreation orientated rather than related to the accumulation of material goods as in non-Aboriginal Australia.

3.3 LIFESTYLE FACTORS

There are a number of lifestyle factors which are identified in the literature which may also influence housing and housing provision.

3.3.1 Lifestyle

Many people in remote areas choose to pursue a camp style lifestyle which has a number of common factors :

- living in moveable housing,
- moving periodically,
- use of fire to cook and sit around,
- group living (either family or social),
- sleeping around the fire (possibly with dogs) for warmth, and
- sedentary periods in association with other groups.

In remote areas there may be a mixture of camp and non-Aboriginal lifestyles intermixed or a multitude of variations in between. Some people choose to live camp style periodically then move into housing, others may choose to live camp style in the yard area of housing and use housing for additional warmth or access facilities on a daily basis. Little literature exists to show how Aboriginal people use space under these circumstances and the impact of such use on the building structure and occupants.

3.3.2 Employment

Little employment is available in remote communities. The case study area provides few employment opportunities. Nursing, teaching and retail opportunities are limited to

minimal positions and are usually occupied by persons from outside the community. Policy directives of ATSIC and other organisations promote the employment of Aboriginal people for these community jobs. Unfortunately these positions tend to be filled by non-Aboriginal people due to the limited educational facilities and other inequalities experienced by Aboriginal people.

The Community Development Employment Program (CDEP)⁵⁸ was designed to provide employment and training opportunities in remote Aboriginal communities. Participants forego unemployment benefits to participate in the construction and maintenance of community projects. While CDEP provides social cohesion to many communities, the employment opportunities are mostly part-time and low-paid work (ATSIC 1998a). Spicer wrote in 1997

The overriding challenge is to ensure that CDEP does not become a lifetime destination for all participants but provides a conduit to other employment opportunities....

(Spicer in ATSIC 1998a, p.44)

Due to the location of the case study area it is unlikely that CDEP will lead to further employment opportunities. It is also unlikely that the need for further positions within the community will materialise owing to the static nature of the population. Therefore it is likely that residents of the case study area will continue to be participants in the welfare system or be nominally employed by government agencies (Altman & Taylor 1987).

Other options for employment may include Aboriginal run enterprises and other businesses. These depend on individual and/or community incentive and can be funded from a number of programs⁵⁹ included under ATSIC's management. The remote localities of the case study area and the skills required to overcome obstacles make the running of businesses difficult.

Community attitudes may not value the work ethic with the same emphasis as non-Aboriginal society. Commitments to land, kin and community relationships may make

employment difficult if it structured with non-Aboriginal priorities.

Lack of employment options and an unwillingness to leave kin land and community to pursue employment options, impacts heavily on housing. Levels of income will be welfare dependent and after housing poverty⁶⁰ is likely to be experienced when rent⁶¹ is introduced to communities. A lack of employment means that individuals are likely to spend a greater period of time at home and use accommodation for a greater variety of functions. Housing designed for people who spend the majority of time within its confines should be very different to housing designed for employed people. There is likely to be a greater amount of time socialising with other people possibly causing overcrowding and pressure on the building. Financial resources may not be available to perform maintenance and improvements to properties.

3.3.3 Substance Use

The overuse of alcohol in many Aboriginal communities is well documented (D'Abbs et al. 1994, Mosey 1994, Brady 1988, Brady & Palmer 1984). A symptom of other social factors, the overuse of alcohol among many other things leads to building vandalism. The residents of Oak Valley decided to place a prohibition on alcohol within their community as a result of experiences at Yalata. Community members wishing to consume alcohol technically do so at other locations outside the community. Oak Valley is located a considerable distance from the nearest alcohol outlet.

Petrol sniffing is a well documented (Brady & Torzillo 1995, Goodheart & Dunne 1993, Brady 1992, Franks 1989) and highly sensitive issue in many Aboriginal communities. The behaviour of people affected by petrol sniffing tends to be introspective and impacts upon housing to a great extent⁶², Oak Valley people have taken measures to secure diesel, petrol and other inflammable liquids to avoid the misuse of community resources and to discourage this practice.

3.3.4 Mobility

Aboriginal communities are highly mobile and social. Communities interact with each other for the purposes of law meetings, funerals and other events. Taylor (1992) noted:

The Aboriginal population has frequent population movement and in nature is short term and circular (therefore unlikely to be detected by the Census). It reflects to varying degrees, activities associated with cultural maintenance, marginal attachment to the labour force and difficulty to access services. It is characterised by frequent movement between places that are familiar and defined spatially by a mixture of social and economic considerations including the location of kinsfolk, traditional associations to land, seasonal or short term employment opportunities and the location of public services. (Taylor 1992, p.108)

The population of Oak Valley regularly interact with the community of Yalata and other areas where kin are located. Housing under these circumstances may be left vacant for lengthy periods of time or occupied by people other than the designated occupants. The AHA has identified that caretaker situations are difficult to manage long term in relation to rental payments and housing responsibility. They have instituted a number of guidelines for housing management committees regarding caretaker arrangements.

3.4 OTHER CULTURAL FACTORS INFLUENCING HOUSING

3.4.1 Women's and Men's Business

Within Aboriginal culture women and men have distinct roles and responsibilities.

Hamilton in describing Aboriginal society stated that

...it (Aboriginal society) appears to show both sexual inequalities and a high level of autonomy for women. (Hamilton in Grieve & Grimshaw 1981, p.85)

Non-Aboriginal feminist views are not transferable to Aboriginal society as power is attached to some roles such as motherhood which are not assigned in non-Aboriginal society. For example Aboriginal women have ...rights to the land and can speak for the land (Brock 1989, p.xxii). These roles affect the planning process for housing. One Adelaide architect⁶³ involved in the design of new housing in a rural area, found only men attended the first community participation meeting. The architect was mortified and insisted on female representation at the following meeting. The women attended, and neither party was able to discuss the planning process freely. This tragic lack of knowledge by the

architect probably prevented the free flow of information and contributed to poor community involvement. Community participation and consultation may be longer and more intricate. The needs of the community will be represented by different people. Provision of housing becomes a lengthier process due to the need to achieve consensus of all groups involved.

3.3.2 Death Customs

Death is an important event in Aboriginal life. People travel long distances to attend funerals and communities mobilise at these important events. Some documented responses to the deceased and their housing include :

- moving the community to a different location,
- destroying housing and/or possessions of deceased occupant,
- leaving housing of deceased occupant vacant permanently,
- leaving housing of deceased occupant vacant for extended period,
- 'smoking' housing of deceased occupant, and
- doing nothing,
- not referring to the deceased member of the community.

The responses are religious in nature and many Aboriginal people possess real fears of the supernatural spirit of deceased kin. The response will depend upon the person's age and the

...social and religious importance of the deceased. The death of a child, up to the age of about three years, or of a very old person may not have a great effect on the camp generally. Such deaths will be regarded as natural ones....

(Wallace in Heppell 1979, p.148)

The death of a young or middle aged adult (Wallace in Heppell 1979) by contrast is not considered to be normal and will have profound repercussions which may raise suspicions of intervention of Spirit Ancestors. Implications of death extend to the family of the deceased, who are obliged to move from the house. There are instances in camp life where

...a group may re-locate itself some short distance away from the deceased's former abode for a period of time. After a while, close kin of the bereaved can move into the vacated dwelling, which, when permanent houses are involved, often results in immediate

kin of the deceased leaving the camp to live with kin in other groups for periods as long as twelve months. (Stoll et al. in Heppell 1979, p.133)

These customs have several implications for housing. Location of housing must be to the Aboriginal community's particular wishes. One example of poor planning was the building of Howroyd's model house in Laverton (Figure 6). The house was built at a former reserve which had been vacated due to a fatal shooting incident several years prior. The house was not accepted by the community and abandoned. Whilst the house had problems, it would appear one of the reasons for failure would be the inability for the housing providers to assess that the area was no longer a 'good place to live'.

Another consideration for housing providers is the acceptance of vacant or destroyed housing which may reflect the community's obligation to themselves and the deceased. These practices have implications for people in need since allocation of further housing while homes lie vacant or have been burnt to the ground is unlikely. These cultural practices appear to have moderated in recent years and housing is generally left vacant for a period then reoccupied.

3.5 SUMMARY

It can be seen that there is a great variance between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures. Using non-Aboriginal models of housing in Aboriginal communities with different cultural traditions may result in unforeseen implications to the occupants and the housing (Table 2). Assessment of housing in relation to cultural factors is difficult. For example overcrowding may not be identified as such or be measurable in the same manner for Aboriginal occupants as non-Aboriginal ones. In this example, overcrowding is usually measured by the ABS by the number of people per bedroom. Given that many Aboriginal people may not use bedrooms and prefer to sleep outside it may be more useful to measure stress on services. Therefore the way housing is measured may need to be assessed. Little research has included the manner in which Aboriginal people use space.

The implications of not taking cultural factors into account have been seen in most of the housing examples outlined in Section 1. Misinterpreting culture still occurs frequently especially at the architect/client interface. One classic example of this is a recent BHP promotional video released on the acclaimed Marika/Alderton house designed by Glenn Murcutt in Yirrkala⁶⁴ in 1984 (Dovey 1996). In one of many examples of misinterpretation, Banduk Marika (the client) points out to Murcutt during the video, that the house will have an extended family living there periodically. Murcutt retorts that another attached dwelling can be built for this purpose. Even after the reported extended period of consultation, Murcutt, did not realise that when she said 'in the house', she meant it. The building of a semi-attached dwelling would probably lead to the extension being permanently occupied by kin. Misinterpretations by non-Aboriginal design professionals continually occur as they endeavour to express Aboriginality in design. As pointed out at the beginning of the section, culture is rarely articulated, requiring extensive consultation to ascertain the cultural requirements of a particular group.

Through identifying possible consequences of culturally inappropriate housing (Table 2) it is hoped to identify some possible housing issues relating to culture at Oak Valley.

TABLE 2: Summary of Cultural Factors Influencing Housing

	Issue	Possible Implications to Housing	Possible Implications to Occupant
Physical and Spiritual Survival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> land/person interconnectedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> exterior of house intrinsic part of house re-appropriation of building materials for exterior use importance of siting house to needs easy access to exterior prolonged absence from housing due to religious obligations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> outside areas likely to be used extensively as living areas importance of siting
Respect for the Inherent Dignity of the Human Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the gaining of adulthood the passing on of knowledge egocentric view of world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conservative approaches to new technology non acceptance/possible misuse of new technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> allocation of housing on seniority rather than need non acceptance/possible misuse of new technologies
Reciprocity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sharing of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stress on structure overcrowding stress on services (i.e. plumbing, electricity) building used by larger number of people than designed for multiple use rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> overcrowding need to secure possessions financial stress non functioning services sharing of resources through community possible health implications

TABLE 2 : Summary of Cultural Factors Influencing Housing cont.

	Issue	Possible Implications to Housing	Possible Implications to Occupant
Kinship Obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing of resources among kin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stress on structure • building overused • multiple use rooms • overcrowding • stress on services • nepotism in housing allocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing of resources with kin • overcrowding • need to secure possessions • financial stress • stress on services • possible health implications • housing allocation on family rather than need • health implications
Individuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • needs of group rather than individual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintenance can become low priority • overcrowding • stress on services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housing allocation on seniority rather than need • conservative approaches to new knowledge and technology • conservative approach to housing
Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • type of lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inappropriate housing • damage through misuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inappropriate housing • damage through misuse
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non working occupants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater periods of time spent in housing • large amount of visitors • stress on services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overcrowding • non functioning services • damage from re-appropriation of building materials • possible health implications

TABLE 2 : Summary of Cultural Factors Influencing Housing cont.

	Issue	Possible Implications to Housing	Possible Implications to Occupant
Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • movement of occupants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • occupant responsible for housing absent • lack of maintenance • rental arrears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-appropriation of housing • periods of absence from housing
Women's and Men's Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • distinct roles dependent on sex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inappropriate housing due to incomplete/inappropriate consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extended periods of consultation to assess needs • delineation of areas in house for single sex gatherings
Substance Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of alcohol and other substances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • damage to housing through intoxication • rental arrears • inability to perform repairs and maintenance due to rental arrears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • occupant unable to tend responsibilities as tenant • dysfunctional homes • possible health implications
Death Customs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • behaviour of community on the death of a member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vacant housing for extended periods • damage to vacant housing • housing in inappropriate locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housing unusable • further housing allocation denied due to vacant housing

⁴⁹ The non-Aboriginal house provided by governments through the public housing system is a typical model consisting of three bedrooms, lounge, kitchen, bathroom and laundry located on a quarter acre block. The researcher notes that during the 1980s and 1990s models for public housing in urban areas have changed dramatically taking the changes of family structures and urban sprawl into account. The model for public housing in the majority of rural areas remains the same and is based on housing the non-Aboriginal 'nuclear' family of mother, father and two to three children.

⁵⁰ Damage to housing generally been in these main areas:

- water damage through non functioning plumbing (e.g. blocked drains, toilets, etc),
- structural damage by reappropriating materials for another use,
- structural damage through testing the capacity of building materials (e.g. pushing star picket through concrete besser block),
- damage through 'cultural' renovations ie taking out of kitchen cabinets to make additional lockable areas, and
- damage to fitting and/or structure through misuse and lack of knowledge (e.g. stove fires).

⁵¹ Reser (Heppell 1979) found that Pitjantjatjara elders living in wiltjas within a community communicated at various times of the day by speaking loudly with each other from individual housing units. The sound flowed through the community and passed information. In non-Aboriginal housing walls and distance between houses do not permit the passing of information in this manner. Ross found that the Aboriginal method of raising children in a tolerant and non intrusive manner was enabled by large visual arenas around housing in which children could be supervised without constant physical interaction.

⁵² Aboriginal cultures are far more complex than is set out here, given the interconnectedness of aspects of culture, simplification is being used. There also will be vast areas of difference between different communities of Aboriginal people.

⁵³ In any culture, components of the culture are rarely articulated by its members but are accepted as the normal code of behaviour not to be challenged.

⁵⁴ For example hanging out clothes etc.

⁵⁵ An illustration of this would be the difficulty of living a lifestyle which was generally outside when living in a multi-storey building and having to negotiate stairs and other obstacles. Many Aboriginal communities in South Australia have requested that the AHA housing be placed at ground level and not elevated (Butler pers. comm.) for this reason. Other obstacles to accessing outside areas could include door types and styles, size of traffic areas (for movement of people and furniture), and the layout of house. The external areas can reflect living styles by making use of windbreaks, vegetation, pathed areas, fire, cooking, play and sleeping areas.

⁵⁶ Housing allocation comes from the community itself within the principles of self management.

⁵⁷ In the previously cited Environmental and Public Health Review in Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands some shocking figures are shown:

- 45% of hot water systems operate effectively,
- 45% of waste system (toilet, shower, etc) operate effectively,

-
- 69% of buildings constructed of fibrous cement are damaged, and
 - 24 % of outside taps do not work ((Nganampa Health Council et al.1987).

58 The scheme commenced in 1977. The original objectives

...being to assist in the development of communities through work programs and thus have them achieve a greater economic, social and cultural strength. (ATSIC 1998a)

59 There are a number of programs developed by ATSIC to:

...promote the economic independence of Aboriginal and Torrens Strait Islander individuals and corporations by facilitating their acquisition, ownership and development of commercially successful businesses and community successful businesses and community enterprises. (ATSIC 1998a p.39)

The specific programs are the Business Funding Scheme (BFS) and the Indigenous Business Incentive Program (IBIP).

60 After housing poverty is the situation where income levels after housing fall below the level for sustained living.

61 Rent becomes an area of some derision in many communities. It is a new concept poorly understood by the members of remote communities who live in portable accommodation in a day to day existence. Often it is difficult to collect by the community due to kin relationships. Many rental programs require that rent is collected in order to conduct repairs and maintenance. Maintenance can become impossible due to arrears in rentals.

62 The impacts on victims, families and communities are not minimal.

63 The architect will remain unnamed for professional reasons.

64 Further discussion on this house is contained in Section 1.



SECTION 4

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS INFLUENCING HOUSING

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The majority of the Australian population live in the temperate areas around the coastal zones. Aboriginal communities have been dispersed from these areas since the invasion of Europeans in 1788 and many existing Aboriginal communities are located in marginal areas with unique environmental conditions. The physical environment has played a large part in the evolution of housing around the world. Housing in its most basic form as shelter is a protection from the physical environment to make living conditions for occupants more comfortable. It is imperative therefore to look at the environmental factors which influence housing in these areas. For the purposes of this work, environmental factors are broadly defined as the factors of the physical environment which affect the physical or mental state of the occupants or the physical state of the house. The environmental factors outlined in this section are specific to the case study area and may generally relate to most remote Aboriginal communities in South Australia with similar arid conditions. Some of the environmental factors which influence housing in the case study area are:

- location,
- temperature,
- dust,
- water availability,
- the community, and
- dogs.

Some of the stated environmental factors influencing housing could be classed as cultural factors. If the factors are not attributed to the occupants, they have been classified as

environmental. Although in the case of dogs (discussed later in the section), it could be argued that they are a lifestyle and therefore a cultural factor influencing housing. This minor detail does not concern the writer, as it illustrates the complex interrelationship between environmental and cultural factors influencing housing. Within this section environmental factors affecting housing⁶⁵ which are likely to be present in the case study area will be examined and the likely influence on the dwelling and the occupant will be noted.

4.0.1 Housing for Improved Health Outcomes

Much work in finding environmentally appropriate housing for remote areas has been aimed at improving health outcomes for Aboriginal people by addressing the environmental appropriateness of housing. The premise used appears to be that by addressing the environmental factors through the provision of housing, disease in Aboriginal communities will be reduced.

The poor health status of Aboriginal people is well documented. The National Aboriginal Health Strategy noted that:

Despite some improvements since the 1970's, Aboriginals continue to die at higher rates, at a younger age and to be admitted more often to hospital. Aboriginal communities, though sharing similar disadvantages and a common heritage vary widely with their health problems and social environments. Despite these differences the standard of Aboriginal health is low throughout the country. (NAHS Working Party 1989, p.8)

The adoption of a model for improvement of health outcomes with the improvement of housing standards assumes :

improved housing = improved health

Evidence of the preoccupation with this argument with respect to Aboriginal housing is shown in a 1987 environmental and health review within the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands which stated :

The history of public health demonstrates a relationship between good living conditions and good health. (Nganampa Health Council Inc. et al. 1987, p.7)

This argument is based on the non-Aboriginal experience where low quality housing with poor sanitation caused lower public health levels. Stretton noted :

Within European history housing has been extremely important, due to the pattern of industrialisation then population.. The quality of housing (and in effect planning, sanitation, water supply and sewerage) determined the level of disease. Cholera is a respecter of clean, sanitised living conditions. (Stretton 1976, p.13)

Aboriginal experience shows that the influence of non-Aboriginal culture, (not poor housing) has been the major adverse effect on Aboriginal health and population patterns have not followed non-Aboriginal models of industrialisation succeeded by population growth noted by Stretton.

The influence of non-Aboriginal culture is evident through the high presence of 'lifestyle diseases',

.. such as obesity, hyperlipidaemia, diabetes and vascular disease.

(Nganampa Health Council Inc. et al., 1987, p.2)

in adult Aboriginal people. The National Aboriginal Health Strategy (1989) showed diseases of the circulatory system are the leading cause of death for both male and female Aboriginal people (Table 3). Circulatory disease and the other lifestyle diseases stated, are symptoms of the convergence of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal culture. Lifestyle choices such as nutrition, alcohol, smoking, and physical exercise are greater components in reduced health outcomes in these cases.

Housing has often been seen as a method of reducing infectious diseases such as:

- hepatitis B,
- gastroenteritis,
- scabies,
- trachoma, and
- upper respiratory tract infections. (NAHS 1989, p.109)

commonly found in Aboriginal communities. Yet in some instances it has been found that frequency of disease increases with housing. In a 1991 study Palmer and Brady noted

Males			Females	
Rank	Cause	SMR	Cause	SMR
1	Circulatory System	2.1	Circulatory System	2.1
2	External Injuries	3.0	Respiratory systems	8.0
3	Respiratory system	6.2	External Injuries	3.8
4	Neoplasma	1.0	Neoplasma	1.3
5	Genito urinary systems	12.8	Infections, parasitic	22.8

TABLE 3 : Causes of Death of Aboriginals in rank order of importance males and females, Western Australia, South Australia and Northern Territory

(NAHS Working Party 1989, p.16)

The only factor that might diminish the frequency of episodes of diarrhoea at Oak Valley is the absence of housing. It was found that of the children with diarrhoea, those who lived in houses had the highest frequency of diarrhoea⁶⁶. (Palmer and Brady 1991, p.82)

It can be seen that the provision of housing alone may not provide greater public health outcomes. Without changes in behaviour and the necessary resources to maintain health (e.g. soap, disinfectant, knowledge) the provision of housing may cause further reductions in health outcomes (Palmer and Brady 1991). The suggested model for improving health outcomes through housing thus becomes :

improved housing + changes to lifestyles + other resources = improved health outcomes

rather than the non-Aboriginal experience. Housing, thus becomes one method by which lifestyles are changed thereby changing and perhaps increasing health outcomes.

Issues of public health in remote communities have been integrated into public housing provision for Aboriginal people for the last decade (Memmott pers. comm.). More recently environmental health reviews have been conducted and a great deal of work has been aimed at getting base line data in the communities to improve health outcomes by addressing environmental factors. 'Housing for Health: Towards a Healthy Living Environment for Aboriginal Australia' (Pholeros et al. 1993) is a document which outlines nine areas of change to be addressed for healthy living environments. These areas are:

- washing people
- washing clothes/bedding
- nutrition
- reduction in crowding⁶⁷
- separation of dogs and children
- dust control
- temperature control, and
- reduction in trauma⁶⁸ (Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia et al. 1994, p.2).

An integrated process including the following factors:

- management and maintenance of public health,
- changes in behaviour,

- income to purchase health hardware components, and
- commitment and knowledge from occupants

is adopted to improve health outcomes. Based on the work by Pholeros, 'Health hardware for healthy living practices' has been adopted for use by the AHA and are included in the basic specification for Aboriginal housing (AHA 1998). ATSIIC's Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP) has recently sponsored a project to educate Aboriginal children on the running and maintenance of housing (Hanson pers. comm.). Therefore all current housing programs adhere in principle to changing Aboriginal lifestyles through housing to improve health outcomes.

4.0.2 Other reasons to provide environmentally appropriate housing

Living in a remote environment does present other factors which are not health related.

Issues which relate to the provision of housing for other reasons such as :

- an environment to live, eat, relax and socialise within,
- an environment to practise and evolve culture within, and
- a home.

are not as readily addressed. It is debatable whether the majority of non-Aboriginals would place health as a major outcome of their housing yet, it appears to be the major focus within the provision and funding for housing for Aboriginal Australia.

4.1 Environmental Factors influencing Housing

4.1.1 Location

As has been noted previously communities are largely located where their customary land obligations lay. The term remote is defined as

...far apart, far removed.

(Delridge and Bernard 1982, p.837)

Remote communities are far removed from urban localities in South Australia and this has a large impact on the type of housing, services and infrastructure available to occupants. Ross (1987) noted:

...The drive for speed and efficiency in providing Aboriginal housing is complicated by the difficulties and expense of travel to many of the locations...

(Ross 1987, p.2)

It is important to note that the localities of Aboriginal communities in South Australia are not considered by the inhabitants to be remote. Traditional lands are considered to be the centre of the universe and urban areas considered as 'remote' (Davis and Kirke 1991).

Certain materials (e.g. bricks) do not travel well by vehicle on unsealed surfaces and may be damaged prior to arriving at the building site. Construction costs escalate when the construction company has to also shoulder costs of travel/accommodation and other infrastructure for employees involved with the construction process⁶⁹. Construction workers may be idle for periods during the construction process and the costs of transport back to urban areas outweigh the costs of keeping them on site. Critical path planning and construction in bulk lots can reduce these factors for building firms involved in the construction process (Joe pers. comm.).

Under *The Development Act 1993* building works are inspected to ascertain compliance with building regulations. This is done in urban and rural areas by the local councils which is not feasible in remote areas. Inspection is conducted by the funding body the community or its delegate. With housing provided by the Aboriginal Housing Authority inspection is periodically conducted by one of their Adelaide based technical officers. Lack of supervision has resulted in the acceptance of sub standard or inferior workmanship in remote regions in some instances⁷⁰.

Housing in remote communities becomes an expensive undertaking with a large proportion of capital funding designated for the provision of housing being consumed by transport. The choice and range of materials and style of housing may be limited by the location of the community and the number of construction companies willing to conduct work in these regions due to location. Certain seasons may not provide favourable weather conditions to complete building works⁷¹.

4.1.2 Temperature

Temperature ranges within housing is an extremely subjective subject. People's perceptions of acceptable hot and cold levels alter with a number of different factors. Metabolic rate, clothing amounts, humidity and air movement are just a few variables in the determination of thermal comfort (Williamson et al. 1989). There is no formal data to indicate thermal comfort levels for the occupants of buildings in the case study area.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that current dwellings can reach extremely high temperatures during summer periods and in some instances become unbearable to sleep in (Nganampa Health Council Inc et al. 1987). In circumstances a reasonable response may be to move outside to live under shade trees .

Temperature has only minor effects in the maintenance of the integrity of building structure. Minor detrimental effect to the housing structure may occur, resulting in changes in footings, weathering of building materials. Other impacts on the environment caused by temperature extremes (ie dust and water availability) also impact upon the building structure and the occupants (refer 4.1.5 & 4.1.6).

Major movement towards climate control in dwellings in current South Australian remote housing is focussed on:

- the construction of verandah areas,
- orientation of buildings,
- the use of insulation,
- air conditioning, and
- shade trees.

Other possible methods of increasing occupant comfort include following:

- the use of thermally efficient materials,
- the installation of ceiling fans to increase interior circulation, and
- cross ventilating houses (eg. a series of opening doors & windows).

There may be some difficulties with the incorporation of some of these into design. Dust reduction and cross ventilation are at odds with each other but careful design can eliminate difficulties. The use of air conditioning may not be economically sustainable in the long term. It would be particularly useful if design standards existed for acceptable temperature levels in remote Aboriginal communities. It would also be useful for designers to be aware of responses to extremely high temperature so these responses could be designed into housing.

4.1.3 Dust

Dust in remote communities impacts on occupants being an aetiological factor in health conditions such as:

- chronic lung disease (including lung cancer), and
- asthma (NAHS Working Party 1989),

and housing can be used to reduce the amount of dust occupants are exposed to. The amount of dust is dependent on wind, temperature, rainfall and the location of the community. The majority of communities located in arid areas of South Australia have severe dust problems which are exacerbated by activities such as:

- the driving of vehicles around the community⁷²,
- children's games⁷³,
- the depletion of vegetation for firewood, and
- no or minimal revegetation post-construction.

As a factor in housing, contractors need to minimise dust during the construction process. Building materials can become windblown and excavation work must be carried out so as not to disturb vegetation and cause root damage to shade trees (AHA 1998). In looking at impact on housing performance, dust can cause the rapid deterioration of moveable components of housing (eg. sliding frame openings) due to the accumulation of dust in grooves. Dust accumulation at the base of the building can block ground level vents on cavity walls.

Given the health impacts it is preferable to reduce the occupant's exposure to dust and the following options can be used:

- windbreaks around structure (especially around outside living areas),
- landscaping and fencing provided with housing,
- high cupboards with doors to prevent dust entry,
- provision of openings which minimise dust entry into house⁷⁴,
- pathing/concreting areas adjacent entry areas,
- placing housing on elevated /slatted platform to minimise entry of dust,
- use of screens/scrim curtaining on doors and windows, and
- orientating housing to take advantage of filtering through vegetation or windbreaks.

Assessment of living conditions should be made prior to the adoption of some options as these may impinge on other living practices. One example of this would be the concreting of all verandah areas. These areas may be used for sleeping areas and whilst concrete may reduce dust entering house it would provide extremely hard sleeping surfaces.

4.1.4. Water Availability

Current AHA and ATSIC criteria insist on potable water being available in a community before access is available to housing programs. Without continuous water availability communities may become mobile and permanent housing may be constructed in inappropriate areas. Water in the case study area is at a premium, as rain and bore water are the only sources of potable water. Considerations for housing in areas of minimal water may involve the following:

- rain water tanks (sited to reduce evaporation),
- revegetating,
- maximum roof catchment area,
- shed areas to act as catchment areas,
- guttering to be maintained to maximise catchment and minimise evaporation,

- consideration of low water waste disposal options (e.g. pit toilets),
- fittings to reflect water shortage (ie stop valve taps, smaller sized basins and baths and low water use shower roses),
- careful planning of ablution areas,
- re-use of grey water,
- separation of potable water for cooking and drinking purposes, and
- separation of potable and salinated water in plumbed areas.

Whilst it is relatively easy to plan housing with water efficiency measures, these are inefficient unless used correctly by occupants. Occupants may find it difficult to restrict water usage due to:

- limited knowledge,
- responsibilities for large group of people, and
- children using water as play experience.

The ethical dilemmas of altering people's behaviour to ensure water/power/ fuel sustainability should be examined. 'Homemaker' schemes have operated from Tangentyere Council (Alice Springs) for the purpose of educating Aboriginal people in the running of a house. In South Australia initiatives have been more cautious. ATSiC are in the process of introducing a CD Rom into the schooling program of remote areas (i.e. AP Lands, Yalata, Oak Valley) to inform students of the sources of water, power and fossil fuels to encourage monitored usage (Hanson pers. comm.). A recent meeting of housing management committees (AHA 1999) listed housing education as a priority to increase knowledge of housing and the technology involved.

4.1.5 The Community

The community has a large impact on housing outcomes. Communities vary greatly around South Australia with their structure, resources, staffing levels, and abilities. For example some communities may have outside sources of income which support community undertakings whilst others will suffer financial stress at times. These factors may fluctuate in the communities periodically due to the individual personalities involved.

These factors can only be judged on an individual basis and have been used extensively by CAT in their planning process. For example, CAT entered one public participation planning process with a community in Queensland where the community was suffering financial stress. Before attempting the planning process, some housing funds were diverted to alleviate acute financial stress as it was recognised that the planning process could not continue and the community could not make vital decisions whilst operating in that mode (Groome pers. comm.). It is vital that discussions with the community recognise the difficulties encountered by communities and the planning/construction process does not additionally put pressure on the concerned community.

The size of a community influences housing in a number of ways. Inter-family relations may be strained by processes such as new housing allocation or repairs and maintenance. Inter-family conflict may have an influence on:

- construction and maintenance programs run by community (e.g. CDEP),
- the desire of community members to contribute to processes to facilitate new housing,
- allocations of housing, or
- damage to housing.

CDEP may build new houses, perform repairs and maintenance on existing housing, as well as other activities (e.g. dust control). Inter family conflict can disrupt CDEP achievements. Depending on council representation certain families may not be allocated housing due to inter-family rivalries.

The size of a community will also contribute to the facilities within a community. Damage done to housing by children may decrease where the community has other facilities (e.g. playgrounds⁷⁵, swimming pools) which give children alternate entertainment. The larger size community may have a greater dust problem due to additional vehicles and children.

The size of a community does not appear to affect allocation of new housing by funding

bodies. Smaller communities are able to access funding to the same level as larger communities. This is illustrated by the substantial amount of homelands within South Australia accessing housing on a needs basis. Access to housing funding appears to be more related to the ability of the community to negotiate successfully with the funding bodies⁷⁶.

4.1.6 Dogs

There are often large and at times uncontrolled dog populations⁷⁷ in remote Aboriginal communities. Dogs contribute to the health issues through the following activities:

- contamination of the immediate environment through faecal material,
- contamination of the immediate environment through spread of garbage,
- contamination of water supply through dogs using of taps for drinking purposes,
- foraging for unsecured food, and
- transfer of canine infections to humans through contact. (ATSIC

1999b). Superficially, it could be surmised that dog populations should be controlled through artificial means. This is unlikely to occur within communities and historically where it has occurred, it has caused friction between the concerned parties (Mattingley & Hampton 1988). Dogs are an integral part of the environment and are important

...as companions, as hunters and as sources of warmth in winter. Hunting 'kangaroo dogs' are particularly prized by their owners. (Palmer and Brady 1991, p.84)

Puppies are welcomed by children and are unlikely to be destroyed due to their entertainment value. In some communities housing becomes one way of protecting food from dogs. In a 1983 study by Coombs et al. with the Pitjantjatjara people (AP Lands) expressed this when one person interviewed stated :

We want to live in proper houses so our clothes won't get dirty: so we can have showers; so our children won't always be sick of cold and wind dirt; so we can store food away from the dogs and the rain.... (Coombs et al. 1983, p.286)

Housing considerations can be focussed on a number of issues:

- separating children and dogs,
- securing water sources from dogs, and

- securing food from dogs.

Some of the issues have been addressed through Aboriginal specific solutions. Nganampa Health Council Inc. have addressed the issues in their environmental and public health review. Their strategies were:

- restrict dog access to food by providing high shelves (internally and externally) on houses, and
- reducing water ponding in house yard

whilst concurrently implementing a dog health program. (Nganampa Health Council Inc. et al. 1987).

4.1.6 Other Physical Factors

Houses also need to be secure against the entry of vermin. In certain areas doors and windows must be sealed to prevent the entry of scorpions and small snakes for occupant safety and comfort (Miller pers. comm.).

4.2 SUMMARY

Many of the environmental conditions found in remote areas of South Australia can be incorporated into design. Often compromise is necessary with the design for one environmental factor at times precluding the inclusion of design features for another factor.

TABLE 4 : Summary of Environmental Factors influencing Housing

Environmental Factor	Possible Implication to Housing	Possible Implication to Occupant
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher building costs • limited choice to housing materials and style • limited number of building firms • possible decreased accessibility to rapid repairs and maintenance • damage to housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inaccessibility to alternative means of securing housing • possibility of sub-standard housing
Temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased weathering • need temperature reducing/ control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extreme internal temperatures • possible high water consumption • possible health implications
Dust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need for low dust building techniques • increased weathering • rapid deterioration of exposed movable features • need for design of storage spaces • design measures to reduce dust • orientation of housing • landscaping to be included in housing • pathing of external path with high usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unpleasant living conditions • increased domestic commitments • need to control levels of dust • possible high water consumption • possible health implications

TABLE 4 : Summary of Environmental Factors influencing Housing cont.

Environmental Factor	Possible Implication to Housing	Possible Implication to Occupant
Water Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need for careful collection of rainwater • alternative approaches to services required for sustainability • limited ability to clean/maintain housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • altered living conditions • need to conserve water • possible limited access to housing programs • need to control levels of dust • possible health implications
The Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability to be involved in application/construction/maintenance cycles • programs facilitating housing • community size may dictate levels of damage to housing • need for siting based on family inter-relationships • need for greater dust control measures in larger communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability to maintain housing and services • allocation on family rather than need • community size may dictate levels of damage to housing • unsuitable siting of housing
Dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need for design of storage spaces • need to provide secure doors • need for external drainage patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • possible health implications

-
- 65 For the purposes of this dissertation the consequences of placing housing in ecologically sensitive areas of South Australia will not be explored. This is an area which needs to be explored in greater detail.
- 66 This is on the basis of evidence present in health related studies not on direct studies of health and housing at Oak Valley (Brady pers. comm.). There was no housing at Oak Valley in 1991.
- 67 Under the heading used in this document crowding becomes a cultural factor relating to housing.
- 68 The reduction of trauma recommended by Pholeros (1993) include reduction if trauma is induced by alcohol and substance abuse and car accidents.
- 69 To illustrate this the average cost of engaging an electrician for a days work at Yalata Community is \$600.00 (O'Brien pers. comm.).
- 70 Areas north of Hawker in South Australia are outside any local government boundaries (Bertram pers. comm.).
- 71 Remote areas in Western Australia and Queensland have wet and dry seasons and are more susceptible to periods where travel to locations and construction can not take place. Most remote areas of South Australia suffer extreme temperature ranges which affect the construction process. Construction companies have encountered the boiling of concrete in newly poured slabs in March (Joe pers. comm.).
- 72 From observation it is very popular to drive vehicles around communities although there may be limited distances to cover.
- 73 One favourite game is pushing a car tyre around in the dust.
- 74 Designing to reduce dust entering housing may also eliminate cross ventilation for cooling.
- 75 Playgrounds are the responsibility of community councils. No communities on the west coast have one. Mimili was able to finance a playground from profits from the community shop. In South Australia only Iwantja has a swimming pool at this stage.
- 76 The writer is not qualified to report fully on this aspect.
- 77 The dog populations are significantly different to those found in non-Aboriginal communities. From observation the dogs may be in poor physical condition. Often the only way dogs can secure food is by scavenging. Fighting over food among dogs occurs constantly. A positive benefit of the dog population is the absence of cats in communities.



SECTION 5

ACHIEVING HOUSING

5.0 INTRODUCTION

As discussed in Section 1 there are two methods of achieving housing in Oak Valley, a resident self-builds from found materials or is provided with housing through AHA or ATSIIC. The purpose of this section is to look at the process which is used by ATSIIC or AHA to achieve housing in the case study area. This is of interest, as a number of programs have evolved, re-structured or been dispensed with. The bodies responsible for housing have also restructured and had several name changes leading to greater confusion. Historical documentation of programs and their structure is lacking. The purpose of this section is to outline the bodies, programs and processes which have lead to, and are used to achieve housing in the case study area.

5.1 HOUSING THROUGH THE ABORIGINAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

5.1.1 Structure of the Aboriginal Housing Authority

The Aboriginal Housing Authority is a State Government Statutory Authority directly accountable to the Minister (Figure 14). It came into operation in June 1999⁷⁸ as a result of a bilateral agreement⁷⁹ with the Commonwealth government relating to the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) and delivery of housing services to Aboriginal people. The AHA is directed by a management board⁸⁰ who are

...responsible for the 1700 State Government owned houses and the annual allocation of Aboriginal Housing monies from both the State and Commonwealth Government...

(Aboriginal Housing Authority 1998, p.7)

Prior to the formation of the AHA, the South Australian Housing Trust was responsible for the provision of public housing to Aboriginal people in South Australia. A separate unit known as the Aboriginal Funded Unit was formed within SAHT during the self-determination era to provide administration and support services for newly formed housing management committees and the Aboriginal Housing Board of SA. The Aboriginal

Funded Unit was restructured into the Aboriginal Housing Unit when legislation implementing tied and untied funding within the CSHA allowed a separate rental program for Aboriginal people (Aboriginal Rental Housing Program) and the Fringe Dwellers Program was implemented. The Aboriginal Housing Unit provided the structural basis for the newly formed Aboriginal Housing Authority.

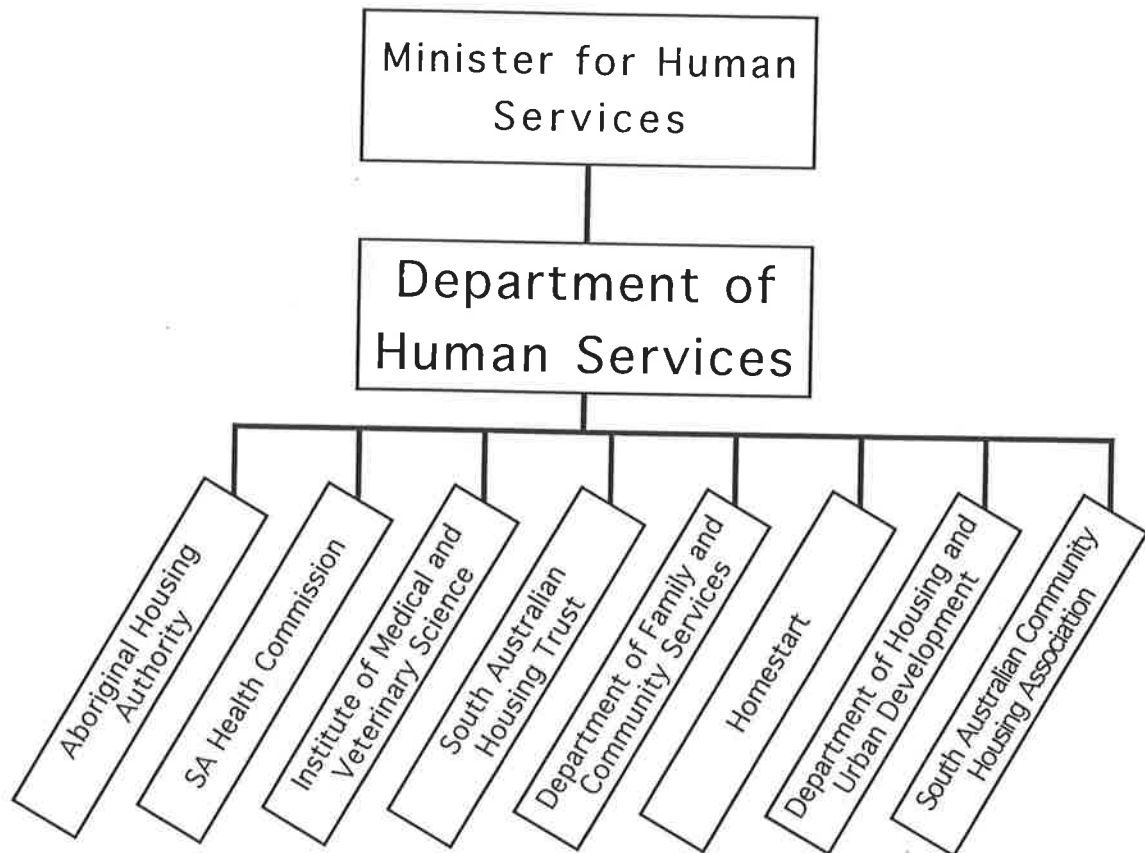


Figure 14 : Portfolio Structure of Aboriginal Housing Authority

source : adapted from DENR 1997 and AHU 1998

5.1.2 Current Housing Programs administered by AHA

The AHA administers two separate programs :

- Aboriginal Rental Housing Program, and
- Rural and Remote Program.

These are funded by monies received through the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement and partial funding from ATSIC. It also acts as a service provider in the provision of

housing and management services in contractual arrangements with ATSIC as the need arises. From the formation of the Aboriginal Housing Authority in 1999, CHIP funding previously allocated by ATSIC regional councils to communities for housing and recurrent funding for maintenance will be redirected to the Aboriginal Housing Authority. (Hanson pers. comm.). Methods of allocation of this funding has not yet been determined. The additional funding will increase the activities of the Aboriginal Housing Authority and current processes for:

- allocation,
- tendering,
- documentation,
- construction, and
- supervision are likely to remain. The processes for repairs and

maintenance may alter with housing management committees taking a greater role.

5.1.3 The Development of AHA Housing Programs

The Aboriginal Rental Housing Program (ARHP) grew from the mainstream public housing program which has operated in South Australia since 1936 (Marsden 1986). Public housing for Aboriginal people began in 1953 when SAHT agreed with the Aboriginal Protection Board to build rental homes for 'specially selected part-aboriginal couples' (see Section 1). The ARHP developed as a separate program when the Commonwealth government legislated for CSHA funding to consist of tied and untied funds in 1979 (Kendig et al. 1987, DAA 1984) parallel to programs operated by the South Australian Housing Trust⁸¹. The Aboriginal Rental Housing Program is administered by the Aboriginal Housing Authority and covers housing in urban areas and rural towns. The housing remains the property of the State government and the program does not operate in autonomous Aboriginal communities or remote localities.

The Rural and Remote Program has grown from two areas:

- housing management committees, and
- The Fringe Dwellers Program.

Housing in autonomous Aboriginal communities (primarily the former missions and reserves) developed from initiatives towards self-determination developed by the Labor government in the early 70s. Prior to this, housing in the communities (then mainly reserves) was administered by the Department of Community Welfare⁸². In 1975 SAHT took partial responsibility for this program with the Aboriginal Housing Board of SA overseeing locally elected housing management committees. The Aboriginal Housing Board consisted of representation from DOSAA, DCW and SAHT. In 1983 the Fringe Dwellers Program was established to provide houses, rebuilds and shelters at Yalata Big Camp, Hamilton Station, Half Way Camp (Ceduna) and Davenport⁸³. Construction of housing within the Fringe Dwellers Program was primarily conducted within the communities.

The Homeland and Community Housing Program in 1992 (SAHT 1992 b) provided

...new housing and other forms of shelter in remote Aboriginal communities.

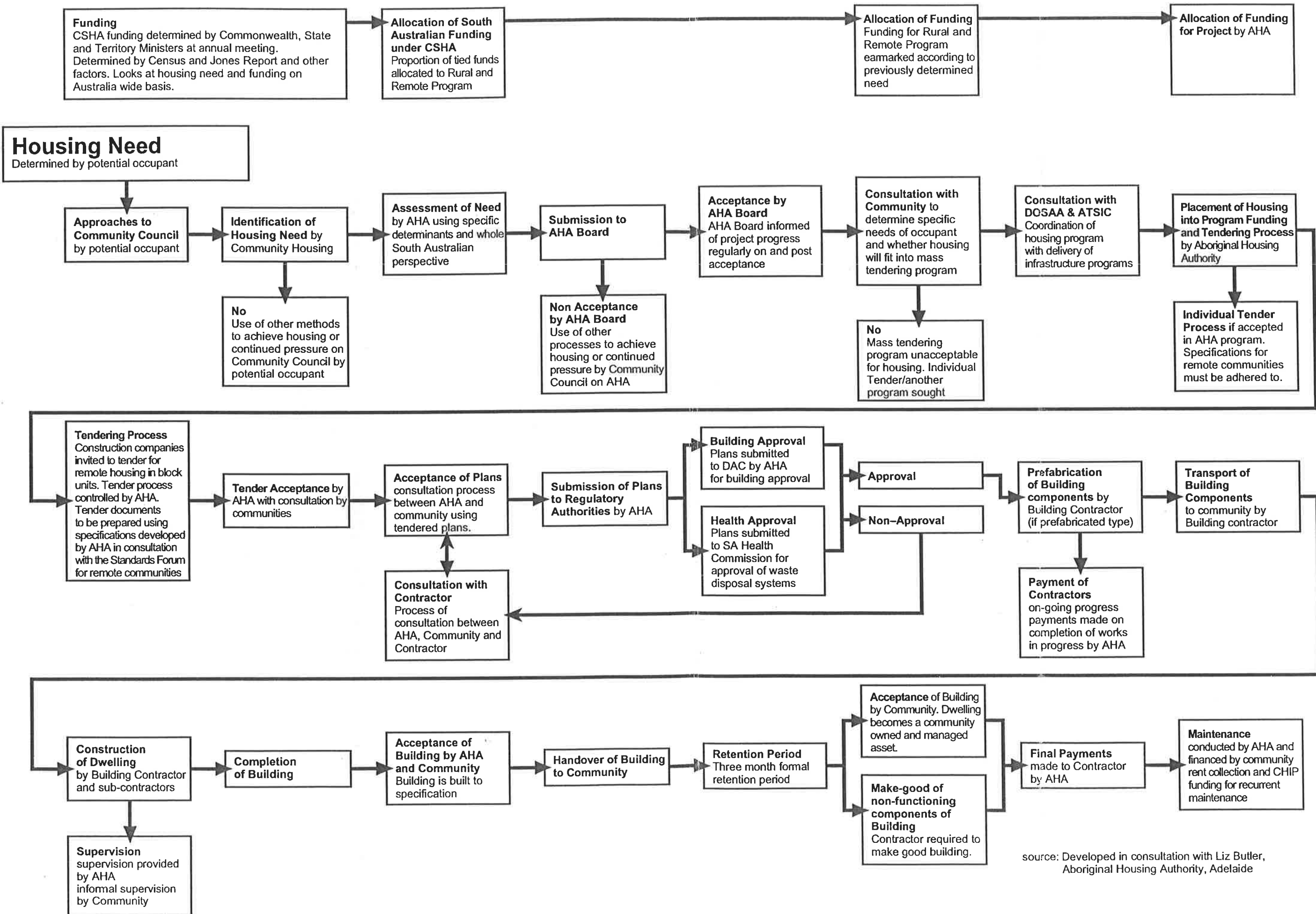
(SAHT 1993a, p.7)

The inception of the Homeland and Community Housing Program brought all the rural and remote areas under the same program and instituted the housing management committee system throughout. The housing became the property of the concerned community on completion. The Homeland and Community Program began to address the issues of sub-standard construction. The Homeland and Community Housing Program restructured to form the Rural and Remote Program in 1997 (SAHT 1998a). The Rural and Remote Program is expanding as it becomes the principal source of public housing for remote communities. The role of the Aboriginal Housing Authority appears to be heading towards purely that of a capital works program with current emphasis being placed on community housing management committees to work towards the collection of rentals to fund and administer repairs and maintenance programs.

5.1.4 Achieving Housing at Oak Valley through AHA

The process used to achieve housing in Oak Valley (Figure 15) may not be used for all

FIGURE 15 Process by which Housing is provided to Remote Communities through Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) by the Aboriginal Housing Authority (AHA)



source: Developed in consultation with Liz Butler, Aboriginal Housing Authority, Adelaide

remote communities throughout South Australia. The process is dependent on the management levels of the community. Remote communities may be classified by the AHA into three categories for this purpose ;

- community with minimal management resources,
- community under management of AP Services, and
- community with self-management resources.

The AHA has differing processes for each category (Butler pers. comm.). Oak Valley has at this time, minimal management resources and requires higher management activity on the part of the AHA.

Other variations to the process outlined in the flow chart may occur where the community structures other programs (eg CDEP) to become part of the construction process or requires variation from the uniform housing models commonly used in remote areas. The use of community labour may lengthen the construction process and involve other government departments (eg. ATSIC). The Rural and Remote Program is also relatively receptive to individual community needs and the charted process may also differ for this reason. However, it is indicative of the process of achieving housing in a remote community in South Australia with minimal management resources.

5.1.5 Summary

Apart from a couple of variations, the process complete with mass tender process, is similar to that used by the SAHT and other mainstream public housing agencies to achieve housing in urban and rural areas. Variations include greater community consultation⁸⁴ and the possibility of design for specific occupant needs. Community consultation is rarely used by public housing agencies due to high demand and waiting lists. Public housing agencies seldom design for specific occupants as greater housing stocks allow variations for family size and disability.

The tender process used can be presumed to be a cost effective⁸⁵ method of achieving uniform standard housing in remote localities. In its current form it presents a number

of concerns. The amount of experienced tenderers who can provide the numbers of prefabricated housing needed is limited and market forces may not operate. It may be preferable to set smaller tenders to develop several alternate sources of prefabricated housing. Large tender size may exclude smaller contractors from tendering, thereby limiting numbers of potential tenders for future projects. This was evident in the 1999 AHA round of tenders for the AP Lands when only one tender was received (from an experienced operator) (Butler pers. comm.). A lack of tenderers may mean lack of choice, and may limit potential development in housing design and competition.

The mass tender process in the current form does not allow community choice for cosmetic fixtures (i.e. colour) and specialised alterations to fittings at the prefabrication stage. The community specifies the location for housing and receives housing from the factory floor as predetermined. For example, a run of green houses may be produced and the cost effective construction method may require critical line planning (ie. construction of several houses in one location then move to another location).

There are benefits of tendering in mass amounts. Accounting and audit can be centralised and reduced thereby allowing more funding towards actual building projects. The AHA have the expertise in the area thereby reducing the community's need to have additional administrative staff in situ. Under the current system cost overruns/underruns are borne by the AHA thereby eliminating financial risk to the community.

The mass tender process ensures the delivery of uniform housing stock. This also has benefits and shortcomings. It may be beneficial to have housing stock with uniform health and safety standards⁸⁶ and durability, but a lack of variation in housing style limits community exposure to different housing styles and may limit demand from the occupants for development to housing. This is evident in many areas of South Australia where the aspirations of Aboriginal families⁸⁷ may be to housing similar to staff housing, which is the only alternative model in place.

Under the current process consultation and participation processes regarding housing issues are primarily the responsibility of the communities. The community appoints a delegate/delegates⁸⁸ who negotiate with the AHA⁸⁹ on housing issues. It may be beneficial for the AHA to offer additional public participation processes to include the greater community as part of its service for increased community ownership and satisfaction outcomes for building projects. One example of service providers employing community participation occurred at Old Mapoon, Queensland where the Centre for Appropriate Technology employed lengthy community participation processes prior to the delivery of additional housing and found planned housing was inappropriately placed⁹⁰ for both cultural and environmental reasons (CAT 1995). Employing public participation processes could be labour and time intensive in the interim but could develop community's ownership of projects and housing management training whilst providing important feedback to the AHA.

Implications for welfare dependant communities relying solely on government funded housing go beyond examining the process used by one government agency. There has been some debate over whether provision of housing by various methods has led to greater independence and self-worth within the communities. Most Aboriginal housing agencies⁹¹ have employed methods, from self-built housing to running community based industries, which incorporate construction. The merits of the various processes to achieve housing have not been sufficiently critiqued in literature for the writer to critically compare these methods and the possible incorporation of the same into the process used by the AHA.

5.2 HOUSING THROUGH ATSIC

5.2.1 Structure of ATSIC

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission was formed in 1990 replacing the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) and the Aboriginal Development Commission (ADC) (ATSIC 1990 c). ATSIC has a tri-level elected body comprising regional councils, commissioners and a chairperson⁹². Each regional council operates as

an independent body issuing regional plans and reports to a state office (Figure 16) which in turn, formulates policy and funding in negotiation with the central office and commission in Canberra. It also works as the principle agency administering indigenous programs (Figure 17).

5.2.2 The Development of ATSIC Housing Programs

The development of current ATSIC programs have their roots in the late 1990s. Until then, the majority of Commonwealth government housing funding was committed to the CSHA, and the housing management committees structure (i.e. ARHP) through SAHT. ATSIC was also administering additional Commonwealth funding to housing management committees for construction and maintenance of housing stock through the Rental Accommodation Program (RAP). In addition, ATSIC was administering alternate housing funding through subsidised housing loans for home ownership and short-term accommodation funding through the Aboriginal Hostels Ltd.

Reports such as the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, and the National Aboriginal Health Strategy illustrated the low level of Aboriginal living conditions in comparison to non-Aboriginal standards. These reports also highlighted the lack of accurate data for planning purposes. As a result the National Housing and Community Infrastructure Survey was conducted in several phases during the 1991 and 1992 period (ATSIC 1992). Key findings showed that beyond housing, funding was required to establish water supplies, internal and access roads and sewerage systems for remote communities. As a result the ATSIC Board of Commissioners merged two programs, namely the Rental Accommodation Program (RAP) and the Community Infrastructure Program (CIP) into one program called the Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP) (ATSIC 1992).

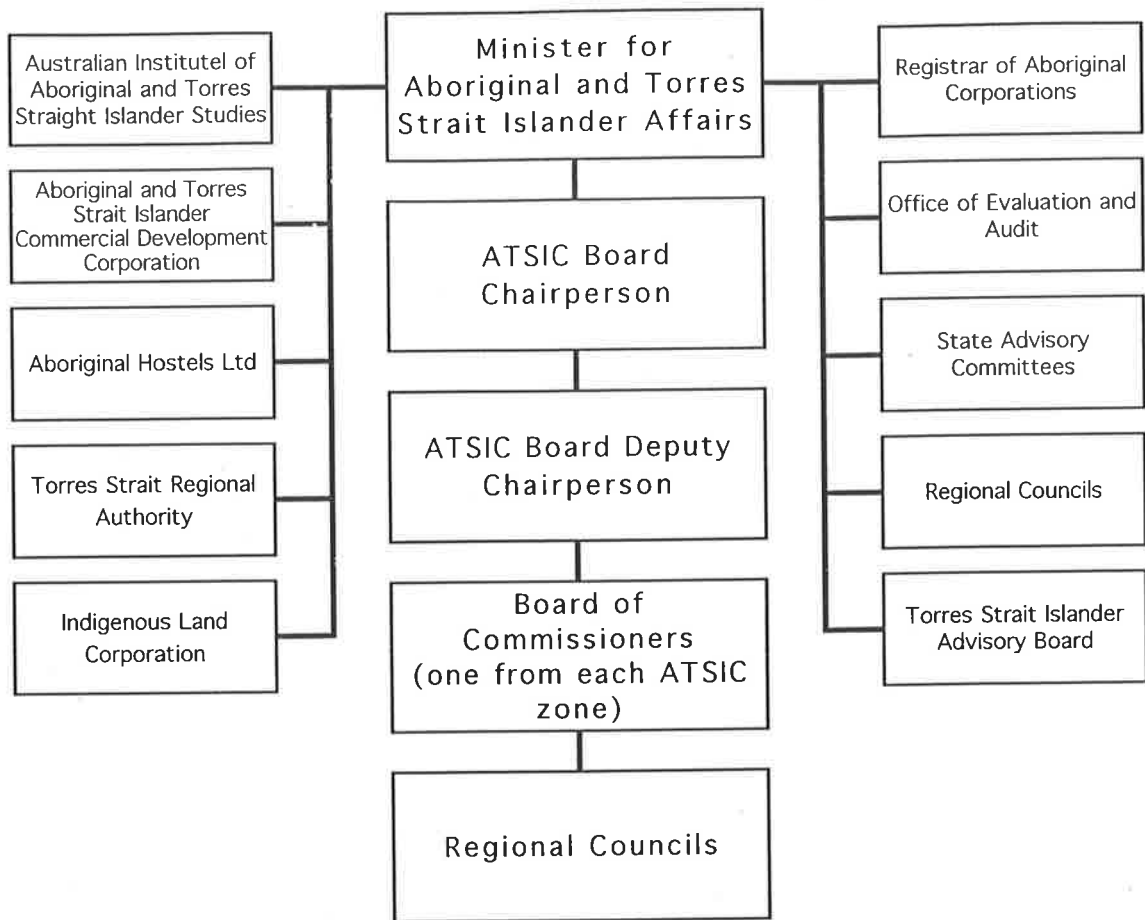


FIGURE 16 : Structure of ATSI Elected Arm showing other relevant Ministerial portfolio bodies.

source : adapted from information within ATSI 1998a

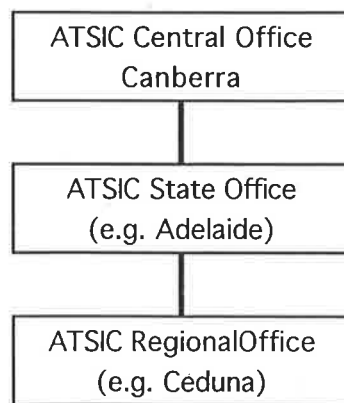


FIGURE 17 : Structure of ATSI Agency

source : adapted from information in ATSI 1998a

The Community Housing and Infrastructure Program was initially aimed at redressing disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal people in the remote communities. In its original form CHIP had two components:

- Development Capital : including community housing, development planning, and supplementary of State/Territory funding for the provision of essential services and staff housing, and
- Community Management and Maintenance : including components of on-going community management and maintenance such as vehicles, office equipment and training systems (ATSIC 1992).

CHIP was expanded in 1994 to include improved health outcomes through the implementation of the recommendations of the National Aboriginal Health Strategy. The following components were added to the programs:

- funding to Regional Councils,
- funding to State/Territory agencies for the provision of essential services,
- funding for National Aboriginal Health Strategy environmental health projects,
- Health Infrastructure Priority Projects Scheme (HIPP),
- funding to Community Councils or Housing Committees to purchase or construct dwellings and carry out extensions/modifications to the existing housing stock,
- recurrent funding for repairs and maintenance of housing stock and operational costs of housing organisations (ATSIC 1995).

Under this structure, housing could be provided under several components of the program with separate qualifying criteria. A moratorium on funding for 'new homelands' was placed in 1996 with criteria⁹³ restrictions placed on all homelands for funding eligibility. In 1999 the HIPP Scheme was discontinued and stringent statewide criteria were developed for NAHS projects.

In 1999 the component of CHIP funding devoted to regional councils for the construction of housing and recurrent funding for maintenance were diverted into the funding programs of the newly formed Aboriginal Housing Authority. This component previously enabled communities to take alternative approaches from those currently used by the Aboriginal Housing Authority and communities were at liberty to engage the services of the building industry as desired (Hanson pers. comm.). The provision of housing and infrastructure to remote communities and in particular homelands has been curtailed considerably since CHIP's inception.

5.2.3 Current Housing Programs Administered by ATSIC

ATSIC currently administers two programs which relate to housing. Home Ownership is supported through the subsidising of home loans to qualifying applicants. This program has little relevance to Aboriginal people in remote communities as there is a preference by community councils for assets to be community owned⁹⁴ and there are few qualifying applicants.

National Aboriginal Health Strategy continues to operate with a view to:

...develop living conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people which:

- are at least the same standard as those delivered to all Australians by Governments,
- provide the basis for sustainable communities, and
- are designed to improve the health and social basis of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

(ATSIC 1999 b, p.1)

The aims of NAHS are multi-faceted and operate under the premise that:

...health, housing and education are inextricably linked. (ATSIC 1998 , p.18)

In most instances the provision of housing is incorporated into the provision of infrastructure of communities, with ATSIC conducting the needs assessment and an appointed project manager overseeing the delivery of infrastructure and housing.

5.2.4 Achieving Housing at Oak Valley through ATSIC

The processes employed by ATSIC are significantly different to those employed by the AHA in the provision of housing in remote areas such as Oak Valley. Housing is provided as

part of an integrated housing and infrastructure program (Figure 18). There is a considerable number of bodies involved in the process⁹⁵. In a significant number of instances the AHA has been engaged on a contractual basis to deliver housing components of the NAHS program.

5.2.5 Summary

There are a number of strengths and difficulties with delivering housing under this process. The main strength of the program is its ability to look at all components of the community holistically. However, the NAHS assessment process is lengthy, illustrated by the three year appointment of state project managers and the number of parties involved in the process. Processes for applying for the program are also lengthy and due to their complexity communities may require outside assistance to prepare their application. Time lags in delivering essential services may impact adversely on communities, especially in instances of access to services and water. The assessment process uses a comparative index on a South Australian level⁹⁶. Within the index certain items rate a point score according to the implications to health. Communities compete with other communities in South Australia for funding. Comparison does not occur on a nationwide basis and communities in one state or territory may fare considerably better or worse because of higher/lower levels of infrastructure and the number of remote communities in a state or territory. Conditions in Aboriginal communities appear not to be actively compared to those in non-Aboriginal Australia although one of the aims of the projects is

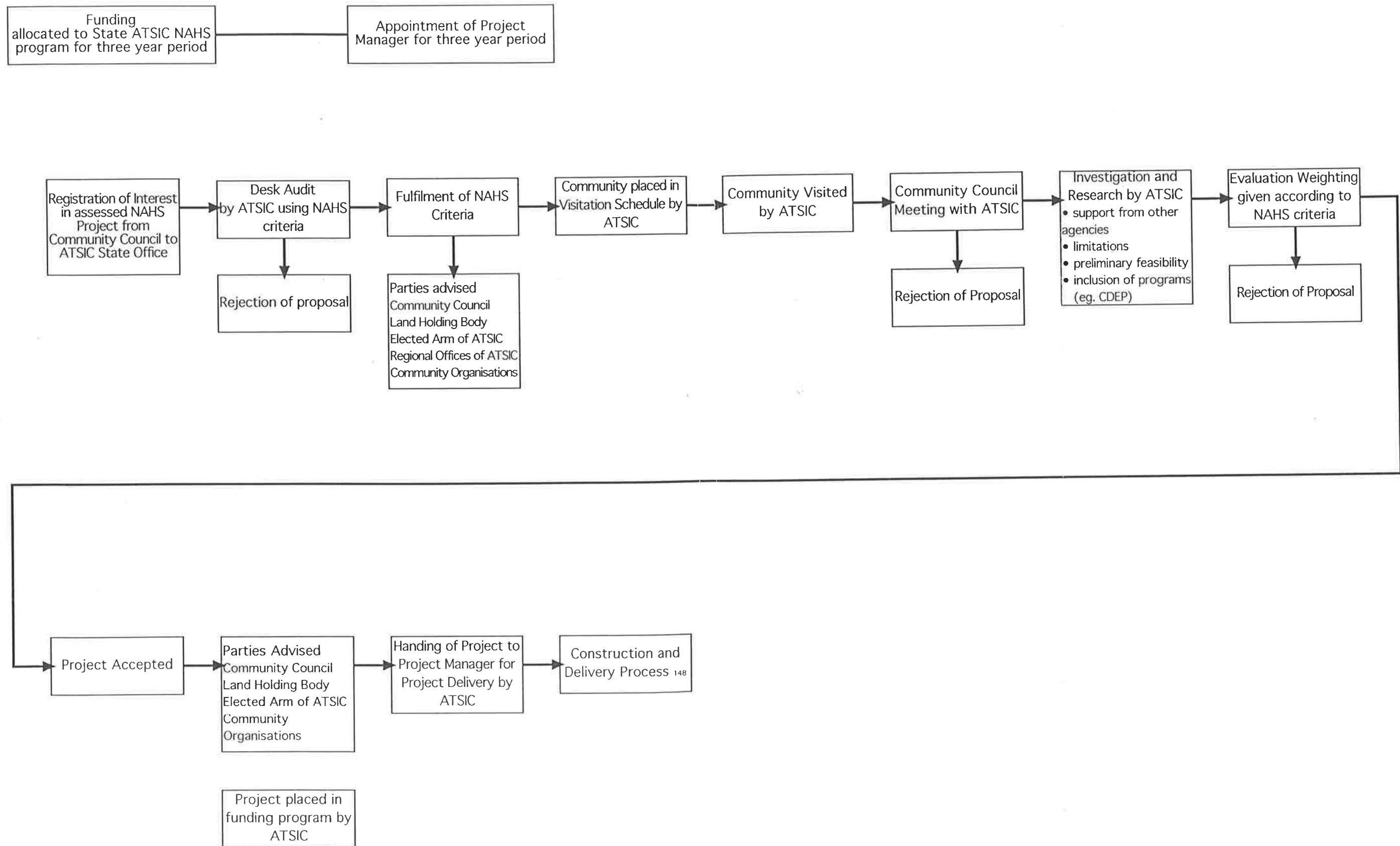
...to develop living conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people which are at least the same standard as those delivered to all Australians by Governments.

(ATSIC 1999a, p.1)

Active comparison between Aboriginal non-Aboriginal lifestyles should occur.⁹⁷

Housing can be provided by outside contractors or using the AHA to organise construction. Housing constructed using an outside contractor does not have to comply with the basic specifications for Aboriginal housing. These standards relate to workmanship and materials used in building in remote areas. Non-adherence could result in housing with lower durability and/or workmanship⁹⁸.

FIGURE 18 : Process by which housing is provided to Remote Aboriginal Communities through ATSIC (using NAHS funding).



78 The Aboriginal Housing Authority was legislated under *The Housing and Urban Development Act., 1995.*

79 Bilateral agreements have been negotiated or are in progress on an Australia wide basis in accordance with *The National Commitment to Improved Outcomes in the Delivery of Services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (1992). This document provided the framework for clarifying roles and responsibilities of all tiers of government across all programs (Porter 1996).

80 The AHA Board comprises of :

- 4 ATSIC representatives (3 Regional Chairpersons and the Commissioner),
- 4 State Representatives (2 from South Australian Aboriginal Housing Advisory Council, 2 other representatives) . and
- 1 Independent Chairperson. (Aboriginal Housing Authority 1998, p.7)

81 Housing programs administered by the South Australian Housing Trust are also accessible to Aboriginal people in South Australia. In certain circumstances it may be preferable for Aboriginal people to use the mainstream housing program. For example, in domestic violence situations it may be preferable for a victim to use the resources of the SAHT as the houses managed by the Aboriginal Housing Authority may be well known in the Aboriginal community.

82 During this period housing for Aboriginal people was referred to as 'aid'. This is illustrated in a 1980 policy directive in which the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs stated:

The purpose of this coordination is to ensure that the total aid program.... (DAA 1981, p.5)

83 Southern communities were serviced by the Aboriginal Development Commission (now ATSIC) (Aboriginal Housing Authority 1999).

84 Occupants of mainstream public housing have peak bodies (eg. National Shelter) which represent their interests in the planning and implementation processes with public housing agencies.

85 It difficult to assess the cost efficiency of this process as there is little comparable information of different construction methods in remote localities.

86 This may no longer apply to houses supplied by the Aboriginal Housing Authority as all housing must comply with specifications drawn up by the AHA in consultation with the Standards Forum.

87 Various studies show aspirations to housing seldom go beyond housing which is in the immediate environment. In a 1994 planning study by the Centre for Appropriate Technology, people's perception of what constituted a 'proper' outstation house was influenced by existing metal prefabricated housing in the area.

88 It of some concern to the writer that the waged non-Aboriginal advisers or staff were always observed present at meetings that the writer has been invited to. It could be presumed that some non-Aboriginal community staff may be making decisions regarding housing that the community should be responsible for.

89 Theoretically, communities have a representative on the Board of the Aboriginal Housing Authority although at the current time, some communities do not feel that they have adequate representation on the Board.

90 The Centre for Appropriate Technology engaged the community at Old Mapoon in participation processes prior to the delivery of housing in 1994. It was found that 70% of the population choose alternative sites to those within the existing community plan for house sites (Groome per comm.). The chosen sites reflected

family relationships, contemporary and historical associations and traditional associations to the land (Centre for Appropriate Technology 1995).

91 The Aboriginal Housing Authority has a long history of trialing various methods with varying success levels.

92 The term 'chairman' is used in ATSIC documentation.

93 Core criteria prior to funding approval are;

1 that the homeland is the principal residence of the core population for a significant part of the year.

2 secure land tenure

3 an adequate and appropriate supply of water, and

4 completion of a planning and co-ordination process, including within Regional Council Homelands Plans, as negotiated in each State/Territory (ATSIC 1999a).

94 Within South Australia tenure or land title of community/homeland land cannot be sold and people may be reluctant to expend private finances on projects.

95 The following will be involved in stages of the process;

- Community Council,
- land holding body,
- ATSIC State Office,
- ATSIC Regional Council,
- elected arm of ATSIC,
- DOSAA,
- AHA,
- SA Health Commission,
- project managers,
- contractors engaged in delivering infrastructure,
- Department of Education, Employment and Training,
- contractors engaged in delivering housing, and
- community organisations.

96 Items are rated according to their detrimental impact on health. A lack of effluent drainage would rate higher than internal roads. A functional airstrip would be more paramount than recreational facilities and so on. The community receives a rating index which is pitted against other communities to determine the priority of the work.

97 It could be presumed that this aim relates to the standard of workmanship rather than achieving comparable lifestyles in remote communities.

98 The basic specifications were established to raise the quality of workmanship and materials used in housing. Aboriginal housing has often fallen victim to sub-standard workmanship and shoddy materials in the past, due to unscrupulous operators or lack of supervision.



SECTION 6

THE CASE STUDY AREA

6.0 INTRODUCTION

Prior to the colonisation of South Australia, approximately forty independent descent groups of Aboriginal people lived in specific areas of the State with clearly defined territories, religion and laws (Mattingley & Hampton 1988) (Figure 19). The groups interacted with each other through trade networks of otherwise unprocurable items. In 1836 the proclamation of South Australia as a British Province was made by Sir John Hindmarsh⁹⁹ (Woolmer 1986) and the process of relocating the Aboriginal people of South Australia into designated areas began. All Aboriginal communities today reflect the impacts of colonisation and the subsequent government policies.

6.0.1 Types of Settlements in South Australia

Aboriginal communities in remote South Australia fall into two categories as a result of the actions of early colonists. Many had their beginnings as missions or government operated reserves (Figure 20)¹⁰⁰. Many Aboriginal people have chosen to stay at these locations, instituting their own management communities and running the communities themselves. Others, alienated from, or restrained within their traditional lands since colonisation, have re-established communities on their traditional lands. In South Australia Aboriginal communities have a number of similarities such as::

- a central Council,
- a school¹⁰¹,
- administration staff¹⁰²,
- a store¹⁰³, and
- a centralised meeting place.

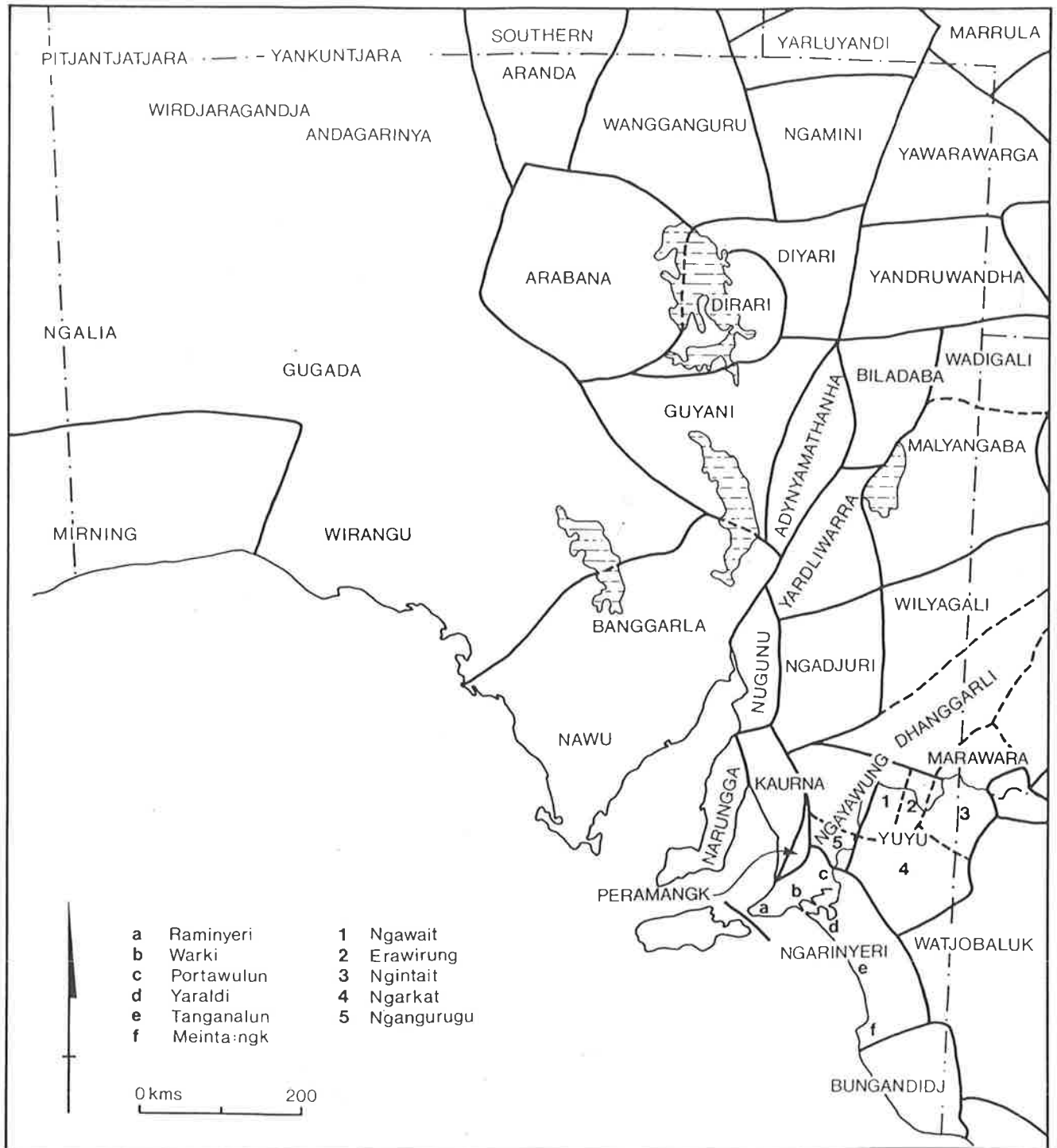


FIGURE 19 : Language Groupings in South Australia

source : Mattingley and Hampton 1988

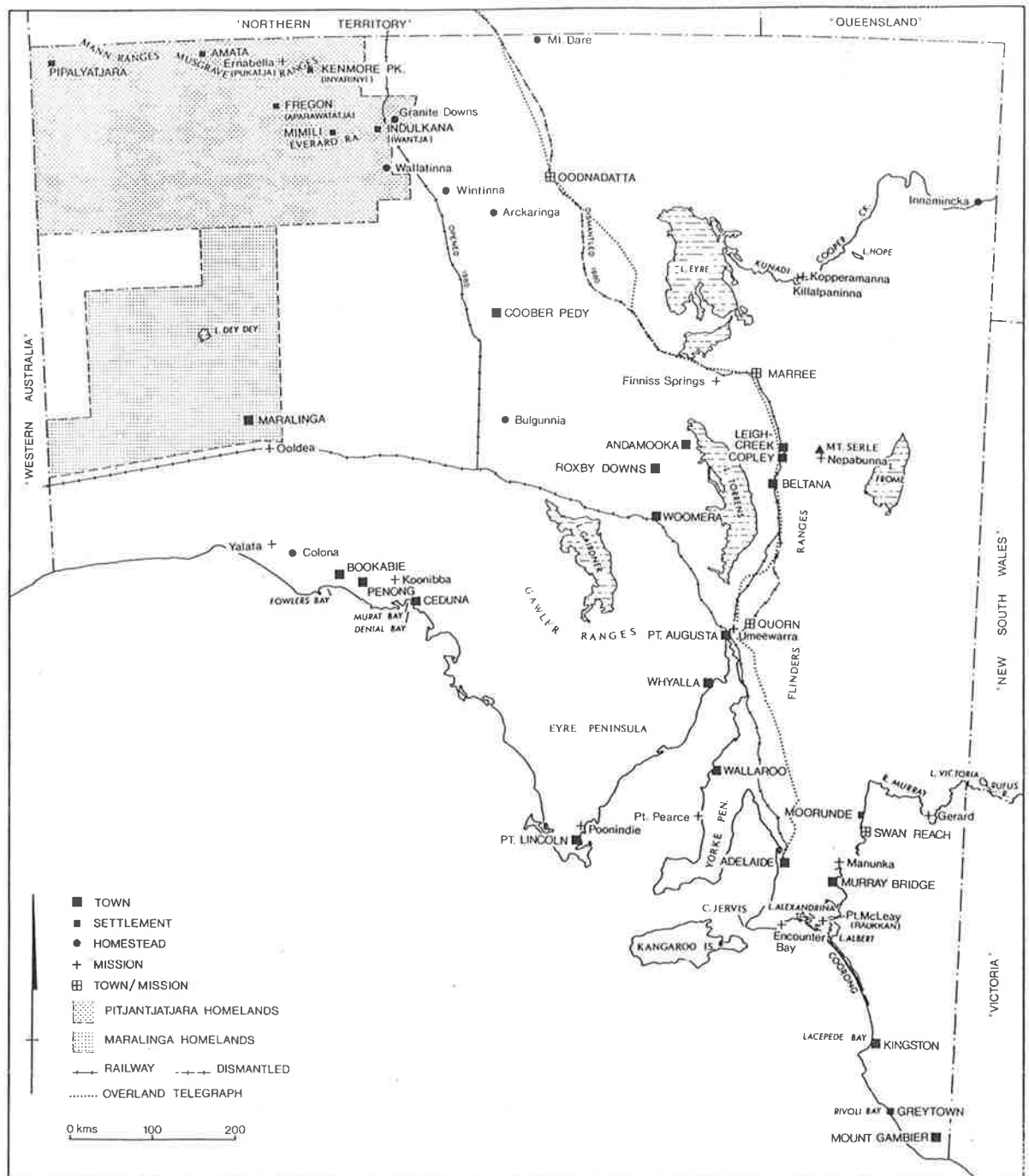


FIGURE 20: Aboriginal Settlement in South Australia since

1836

source: Mattingley and Hampton 1988

Living in communities may present a number of problems which have led some individuals and families to set up homelands¹⁰⁴. Homelands are areas of traditional land which are inherited¹⁰⁵, and to which an Aboriginal person has an obligation to nurture and care for. Generally, mobility between homelands and the community is strong and people may reside in both intermittently.. Homelands in South Australia vary greatly, with the common defining factor as the confinement of a land area to one family descent group¹⁰⁶ and may have features such as:

- a TAFE,
- medical facilities, and
- arts and crafts facilities.

Oak Valley is a recent community in South Australia which is a rarity, other communities often being continuations of settlement patterns of missionaries and government authorities. It is the homeland of Anangu, the traditional owners who have resettled the area after a considerable absence. Many of the community members retain intimate kin-based relationships to land and their land obligations.

6.1 OAK VALLEY

6.1.1 Introduction

Oak Valley is small desert community located within Maralinga Tjarutja Lands (Figure 21), an area of some 76,000 square kilometres. It is located 140 kms north west of Maralinga and 1290 kms from Adelaide (a 6 or 7 hour journey by vehicle over unsealed roads from Yalata). Until recently the only housing was wiltjas and yuus, with limited use of old car bodies and one caravan. Oak Valley has been re-settled on a permanent basis since 1982. The area consists of red sand dunes with vegetation of desert oaks, mulga and spinifex (Kakarrara Wilurrara Regional Council 1994) and is arid but

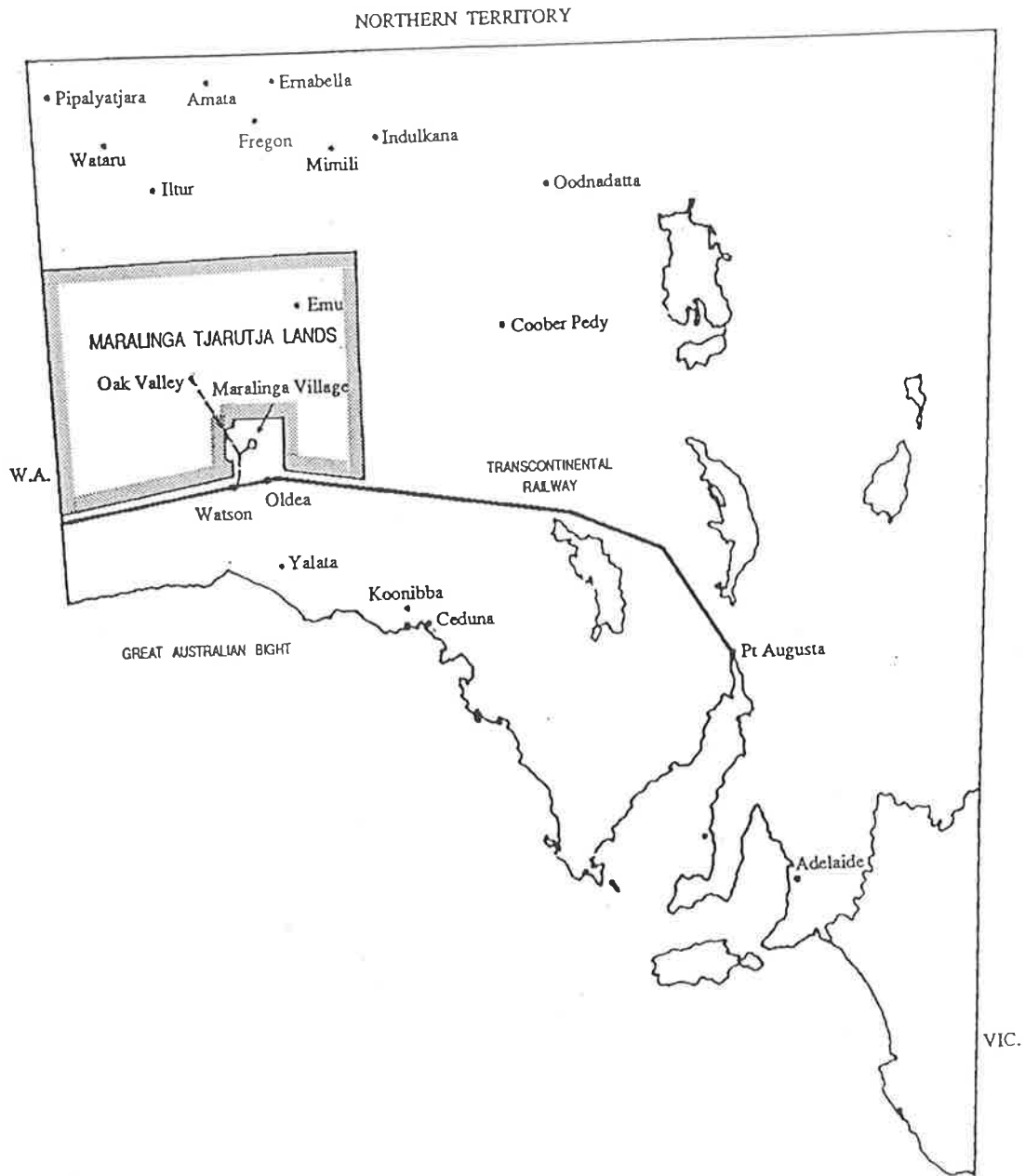


FIGURE 21 : Location of Oak Valley, Maralinga Tjarutja Lands

note: Oldea spelt incorrectly

source : Davis and Kirke 1991

experiences isolated thunderstorms. It is a comparatively new community, which has experienced lengthy delays in the provision of infrastructure and housing due to the lack of potable water¹⁰⁷ and the proposed decontamination of areas by the Federal Government (Australian Property Group 1997). The housing examples illustrate the recent development of housing styles in remote areas of South Australia.

6.1.2 Ooldea

Many of the present day population of Oak Valley or their forbearers had their first contact with non-Aboriginal people at Ooldea Soak (located approximately half way between present communities of Yalata and Oak Valley). Ooldea Soak was always a traditional meeting place and ceremonial ground with a plentiful source of water for the traditional owners, the Wirangu people and other groups (ie. the Kukatas, the Minnings, the Aluridjas and the Wongapitchers)(Mattingley & Hampton 1988). The Trans-Australian¹⁰⁸ railway was constructed east west across the Nullarbor in 1912. The railway was located approximately six kilometres over the sandhills from Ooldea Soak and to provide water for the railway, a series of wells and pipelines were constructed transporting water from the soak and surrounding areas. Aboriginal people were denied access to the pumped water, yet the railway siding was attractive to Aboriginal people, and many groups travelled to camp at the soak, and to trade with train passengers at the siding. In 1918, Daisy Bates set up a self styled mission¹⁰⁹ near the soak and for 16 years attempted to stop the interchange¹¹⁰ between Aboriginal populations and passengers on the railway¹¹¹. In 1922 the results of the over zealous boring activities at the soak became evident

... two bores put down at Ooldea Soak resulted in an outburst of salt water.

(Bates 1938, p.211)

In all 52 bores had been sunk, which had pierced the underlying retentive clay pan. The water became brackish and the siding was closed down. The United Aboriginal Missions (UAM) began mission work in the area in 1933 (Mattingley & Hampton 1988) and constructed dormitories and a school coercing children to live within the dormitories

while adults continued to live in camps outside visual distance of the buildings.

6.1.3 The British Nuclear Test Program

In 1951, 401 Pitjantjatjara and 67 Gugada¹¹² people were moved from their land around Maralinga in the Great Victoria Desert to make way for the British nuclear tests program which began in the following year (Goodfield et al. 1991). The majority were moved to the UAM Mission at Ooldea and other settlements both in South Australia and Western Australia. During the ten year period between 1953 and 1963 the British Government, in collaboration with the Australian Government, conducted atmospheric atomic tests and malfunction trials of uranium and plutonium based devices at two locations (ie. Emu Field and Maralinga) on the Aboriginal lands (Palmer and Brady 1991). Radioactive contamination was spread over an area of several thousand square kilometres. The atomic bomb tests (the major trials) left major environmental impacts at Maralinga, and numerous smaller experiments known as `minor trials` left even greater legacies. From 1953 to 1963 the minor trials¹¹³ cumulatively left in excess of 23 kilograms of radioactive plutonium buried in the area¹¹⁴ (Goodfield et al. 1991). Access to the areas was limited upon application to government authorities and the ability of Aboriginal people to customarily caring for country and to educate younger Aboriginal members on significant sites was denied.

Some Aboriginal people were `missed` and left in the area during the military `roundup` in 1957 (Mattingley & Hampton 1988). One family, the Milpuddies camped at Maralinga¹¹⁵ near the crater of a 1.5 kiloton bomb for seven months after detonation.

They

...subsequently suffered numerous premature deaths and extraordinary ill health. Edie Milpuddie gave birth to a stillborn child soon after, her next child, Allen died of a brain tumour. (Goodfield et al. 1991, p.28)

The majority of the Aboriginal groups who settled at Ooldea retained intimate knowledge of, and attachment to their lands (Palmer and Brady 1991) and periodically visited their desert homelands (Berndt 1941). In 1962, Premier Playford promised that the

ancestral lands would be returned to Aboriginal people at the cessation of the atomic testing (Goodfield et al. 1991).

6.1.4 Movement from Ooldea to Yalata

People living at Ooldea were again moved when the mission closed in 1952. The Aboriginal population was encouraged to move to a new mission Yalata, near Ceduna, but the majority did not want to move outside their customary lands. Given the connection of land to all parts of life, it would have been as enticing as:

...transportation to Botany Bay had been to Londoners.

(Davis & Kirke 1991, p.21)

Lutheran Missionary, Kriewaldi spoke of the move (Palmer 1982 op. cit.):

To their (the Lutheran Missionaries) disappointment they discovered that only twenty percent of the natives were willing to travel southward. The majority wanted to go to Ernabella or Western Australia. What prompted them to do this we have not been able to determine yet. The two large trucks accordingly left for Colona¹¹⁶ with 50 or 60 natives on board. It seemed as if Satan had gained a major victory. God, however, was still at the helm. The natives who had gone to Tarcoola returned to Ooldea and were now willing to go down to Colona.

(Kriewaldi in Hampel 1977, p.8).

Maralinga Tjarutja administrator, Dr Archie Barton¹¹⁷ recalled the move to Yalata:

The missionaries told us we had to move. We did not know where we were going or how long we were going or how long we would be away. Shifting the people to Yalata has nearly destroyed them...

(Barton in Mattingley & Hampton 1988, p.242)

When the group transferred, some refused to live at Yalata (numbers ranged upwards of 200) and a camp was settled, known colloquially as 'Big Camp'. 'Big Camp' was situated beyond walking distance from Yalata and moved periodically to be located to anything up 20-30 miles away (State Aboriginal Co-ordinating Committee 1985). Gale on a visit to the Yalata Reserve in 1960 noted:

Housing types include wurlies, with the exception of one family all accommodation (was) in wurlies in a camp which is periodically moved to a new location on the reserve. The one family (who had established its wurley away from others) have recently moved into a European house. Previous attempts to build European housing for residents have been unsuccessful ...

(Gale 1964, p.171).

Other accounts described the situation:

Living conditions for all Aborigines at Yalata are extremely poor, uncomfortable and unhygienic. Lack of drinking water is a constant problem, often polluted and frequently simply unobtainable... (Palmer 1982, p.10)

Yalata was bought by the South Australian Government in 1950, and administered by the Lutheran Church of Australia under special agreement with the South Australian Department of Social Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs (Gale 1964). The reserve is located on the coast of the Great Australian Bight approximately 600 miles west of Adelaide. The mission differed from others in South Australia in that it contained a variety of different groups of Aboriginal people, which led to disharmony and discontent.

Whilst living at Yalata, the group at 'Big Camp' (now generally known as Anangu)¹¹⁸ began negotiations for the land title of, and their return to the Maralinga Lands (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs 1984). Under continual pressure from the group, the Superintendent of Yalata gained permission in 1966 for short visits¹¹⁹ to the prohibited areas (excluding the test areas) to nurture their land. The Aboriginal population whilst keen to be reunited with the land were

...reluctant and fearful of the 'poison' that they had been told lay in the ground... (Palmer & Brady 1991, p.2)

and

They believed The Dreaming had been shattered at Maralinga, the rock holes contaminated and the integrity of the landscape violated. (Palmer & Brady 1991, p.2)

6.1.5 The Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Bill 1984

In 1975, Yalata Reserve was transferred to the Yalata Community Council and the Anangu stepped up their campaign for the land title over their ancestral lands (Mattingley & Hampton 1988). Apart from the paramount social and religious needs of the Aboriginal people to move back to their lands, there was major social dysfunction at Yalata with its mixture of dissenting peoples and the introduction of alcohol to the community¹²⁰. The Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement was engaged to claim title over the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands. The Liberal Government negotiators favoured title to be held by the Aboriginal

Lands Trust, but the Elders insisted on a separate title similar to that held by the Anangu Pitjantjatjara people. During 1982, discussions for the return of the lands were held in Yalata and Ooldea with little progress. The Yalata Community chose not to join with the Pitjantjatjara Council in seeking common title over the lands. The Parliamentary Bill was delayed by changes of government and was finally introduced into State Parliament in 1983. It was further delayed and referred to a Select Senate Committee. After visits to Yalata by the Select Senate Committee, a compromise was met in the areas of mining and access.

After this extended period of negotiation,¹²¹ the *Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Act* was passed through the South Australian Parliament in 1984 (Figure 22) and the Anangu were given inalienable freehold title to 76,420 square kilometres of land (Kakarrara Wilurrara Regional Council 1994) and were able to negotiate with people wishing to use their land ¹²² (DOSAA 1981). Maralinga Tjarutja was set up under the same legislation as a corporate body to look after the land with all traditional owners being recognised as members of this body (Mattingley & Hampton 1988).

6.1.6 The Royal Commission

After the nuclear testing, army personnel involved reported having instances of unexplained illnesses and premature deaths. A British memo dated 1953 stated:

The Army must discover the detailed effects of various types of explosions on equipment, stores and men with and without protection....

(unknown source in Goodfield et al. 1991, p.28)

Evidence such as this formed the basis for the establishment of a Royal Commission by the Federal Labor Government to investigate the effects of atomic testing. The Royal Commission battled to gain formal documentary evidence from the British government and took verbal submissions from the involved parties in a land rights style of interviewing for the concerned Aboriginal people. The Royal Commission reported back the following year.

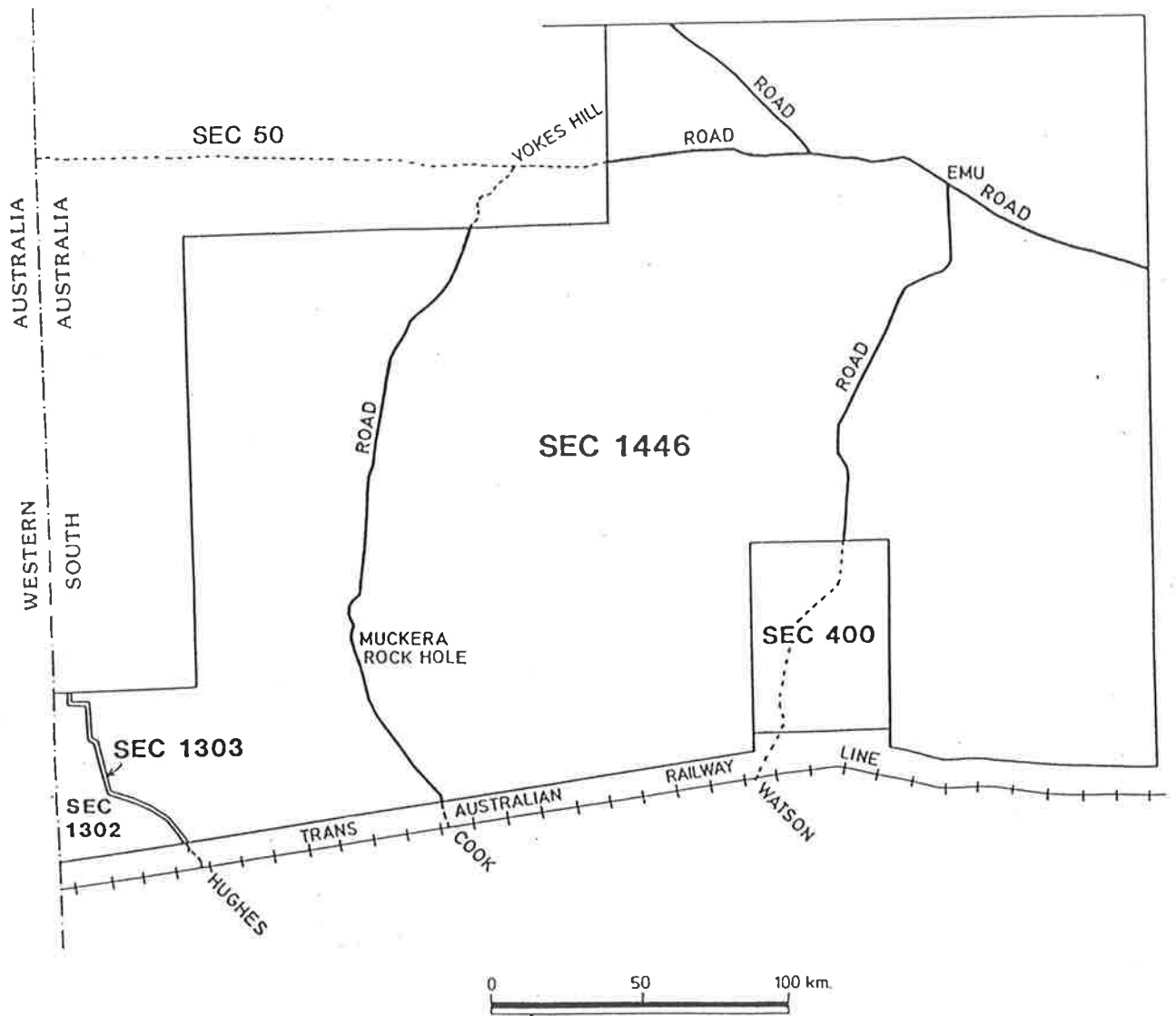


FIGURE 22 : Land Area granted under Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Act 1984. Note area around Maralinga (Section 400) excluded.

source : *Maralinga Tjarutja Lands Rights Act 1984*

One recommendation was:

Action should be commenced immediately to effect the clean-up of Maralinga and Emu to the satisfaction of the Australian Government so that they are fit for unrestricted habitation by the traditional Aboriginal Owners...

(McClelland et al. 1985, in Palmer and Brady 1991, p.3)

A Technical Assessment Group was established at the conclusion of the Royal Commission to assess options for a radioactive and environmental decontamination and rehabilitation. The report tabled that it would cost \$600 million to clean up plutonium by removing contaminated soil¹²³ (Goodfield et al. 1991). Maralinga Tjarutja decided to accept for a cheaper \$95 million option from the Technical Assessment Group which involved remediation of test areas and fencing off an of area 300 square kilometres and monetary compensation for

...having to live outside the fence for the next 240,000 years.

(Goodfield et al. 1991, p.29)

6.2 RESETTLEMENT OF THE MARALINGA TJARUTJA LANDS

6.2.1 Movement back to the Lands

Prior to the Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Bill being passed, a group from 'Big Camp' visited the Great Victoria Desert in 1981 with a view to establishing an 'outstation' to Yalata¹²⁴. The administration of Yalata encouraged the move back to the lands in the following year by providing transport and some provisions. Eighty people and their children, (Mattingley & Hampton 1988) initially camped at Pedinga, approximately halfway between Yalata and Ooldea, then set up camp in Lake Dey Dey, later known as Oak Valley (State Aboriginal Co-ordinating Committee 1985). The Lake Dey Dey camp lasted approximately six months until lack of infrastructure¹²⁵ forced participants back to Maralinga. The group then notified the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Office of Aboriginal Affairs of their intention to settle at Oak Valley and requested water. Portable water tanks were transported from Port Augusta¹²⁶ on a regular basis. Anangu people camped around the area along the Aquitaine Road¹²⁷ moving as firewood and natural resources depleted, and inter-personal relationships demanded alternate spatio-relationships. During this period, the population of the area was estimated at between 60

and 80 people with numbers increasing to approximately 200 during school vacation periods (Kakarra Wilurrara Regional Council 1994).

6.2.2 Provision of Shelter

The people wished to have accommodation, but due to water shortages, funding bodies were reluctant about providing permanent structures and nomadic camps persisted. Requests for tents were forwarded in 1983, to the then, Aboriginal Housing Unit, which created some dilemmas. The Fringe Dwellers program was anticipated as providing

...stable, suitable, progressive shelter and housing. (Aboriginal Housing Board 1983b, p.6)

After much discussion with stakeholders, tents (Figure 23) were supplied on the assumption that other types of shelter would be forthcoming at a later date. The army style tents proved to be inflexible to the people's needs¹²⁸ and a supply of tarpaulins was substituted. These were placed over the traditional wiltja frames and secured for waterproofing and greater thermal efficiency. The primary concern of the community at the time were to secure water. A series of four water sheds (Figure 24) were constructed in the period 1985-88 for the collection of rainwater. The water sheds were of a 'butterfly' construction consisting of a large winged water catchment area (roof) with tank storage underneath. Supplied through the Aboriginal Housing Unit, the sheds were to serve a dual function as shelter and were spread over a large area:

- to catch rainfall resulting from isolated thunderstorms
- to provide decentralised sources of water so people can camp at various locations in the Maralinga Lands. (Davis and Kirke 1991, p.45)

The water sheds were not extensively used as shelter and people tended to camp some distance from them. Literature shows there may have been a number of reasons for this including:

- to avoid over use of firewood and other natural resources (Finlayson 1935),
- to discourage wastage of water through children's play (Davis and Kirke 1991),
- to allow animal food sources to be attracted to water (Gould 1969), and

- to maintain kin avoidance practices (Gould 1969).

By the end of 1985 the community had a radio, and regular fuel supplies (Kakarrara Wilurrara Regional Council 1994) and an ablutions block¹²⁹. In the following year, Oak Valley Maralinga Inc. was established to care for the people's needs and to communicate with the land holding body, Maralinga Tjarutja, located in Ceduna. Approximately 60 people lived on the lands through the 1986-87 period when division occurred over who should be responsible for them. There were a number of difficulties with the return to the lands including:

- a lack of water,
- a dependency on Yalata or the Tea and Sugar Train for stores¹³⁰,
- transport logistics of movement between Yalata and Oak Valley for family commitments¹³¹,
- intermittent medical services¹³², and
- intermittent schooling¹³³.

Funding possibilities for the group hinged on the supply of potable water and in 1986 the South Australian Health Commission called for tenders for a water investigation and viability study. Eco-Tech Pty. Ltd. won the contract and immediate action was taken by the company to implement some recommendations to provide improvement to water supplies prior to their report being released. These included:

- trailer tank improvements (to reduce contamination),
- hand pumps on three low salinity bores west of Oak Valley,
- hand pump on high salinity bore (near airstrip), and
- upgrading to solar pumps and tanks on selected bores.

Government funding agencies still hesitated to provide funding for infrastructure and permanent housing to the community¹³⁴ and protracted negotiations continued. Most of the community moved back to Yalata from the period 1989¹³⁵ to 1991, leaving Maralinga Tjarutja, the land holding body, and Oak Valley (Maralinga) Inc, to hold further discussions with funding agencies to achieve greater services.



FIGURE 23: Army Style tents supplied to Oak Valley as the first initiatives towards housing in 1983. These proved to be inflexible to peoples' needs.
source : Aboriginal Housing Authority



FIGURE 24: Water shed. This example is located along the Aquitaine Road south of Oak Valley. The water shed collects rain from isolated thunderstorms and supplies shelter to people travelling between Oak Valley and Yalata.
source : Aboriginal Housing Authority

6.2.3 Infrastructure Development from 1991 to 1994

The community was re-established on a permanent basis in 1991 and Oak Valley (Maralinga) Inc and Maralinga Tjarutja continued to ask for funding for infrastructure. Permanent structures were again resisted by funding agencies due to the water situation and the mobility of the population. Minimal infrastructure was provided at the Oak Valley site including a steel framed store, a prefabricated house and a large steel shed¹³⁶. Telstra established a communications compound and the Department of Education and Community Services (DECS) provided a caravan school and caravan accommodation for teaching staff. The South Australian Health Service also provided mobile accommodation for nursing staff and a transportable health clinic. The Eco-Tech report was released in 1991 suggesting that limited water supplies through tanks could be viable for sustained health and water solutions in a number of different settlement scenarios.

6.2.4 Funding from Health Infrastructure Priority Project

It was recognised by funding bodies that the community was determined to stay on the lands and a large amount of infrastructure was required to make habitable conditions in Oak Valley. In correspondence to the appointed ATSIC project managers, Oak Valley (Maralinga) Inc. stated:

Oak Valley people are ageing with many in their 60's and 70's and they live in appalling conditions with high temperatures (approaching 50 degrees in summer), incredible dust and no shelter whatsoever. (Oak Valley (Maralinga) Inc 1995, p.1)

In 1995, the National Aboriginal Health Strategy (NAHS) launched a pilot program for the introduction of health infrastructure into remote communities on an Australia wide basis. The Health Infrastructure Priority Program (HIPP)¹³⁷ initially allocated funds for a health clinic in Oak Valley. A Brisbane based engineering company Ove Arup and Partners was engaged nationally as the project manager (Hanson pers. comm.). A joint agreement was formulated so that local project management could be achieved within the State and the Australian Property Group¹³⁸ took responsibility for project management. Additional HIPP funding was made available to:

- undertake water drilling investigations¹³⁹,
- provide suitable community water and power¹⁴⁰ supplies, and

State Grants and regional council funding from ATSIC to provide:

- staff housing, and
- an upgrade of community infrastructure (Arup 1995).

APG developed a community plan in 1995¹⁴¹ (Figure 25, contained in back pocket) to plan the location of infrastructure. Additional funding was incorporated for upgrading the airstrip, and Maralinga Tjarutja also allocated monies to upgrade the store and place underground fuel tanks for inflammable liquid storage¹⁴².

6.2.5 Permanent Housing

Housing need continued to be serviced primarily by the then Aboriginal Housing Unit from CSHA funds¹⁴³ and the supply of tarpaulins continued. A tender was let to develop a specific purpose tent as a more suitable alternative. The 'spider' tent (Figures 33 and 34) was developed by Nomadic Enterprises with a steel frame, a similar shape to a wiltja¹⁴⁴ and a tarpaulin cover. This was substituted for the tarpaulin distribution. Permanent housing was requested by the community and during meetings between the Aboriginal Housing Unit and the community consideration was asked on the issues of:

- what appliances and equipment and features were to be incorporated into housing, and
- the extent of continuation of traditional life when housing was provided to assess power and water supplies (Australian Property Group 1995).

In proceeding discussions between the then AHU and the community, a decision was made to adopt housing models (i.e. Nomadic prefabricated houses) used in the AP Lands and Yalata. The community had various expectations of the housing to be supplied (Appendix 6). To include all housing in HIPP planning process, the then AHU made funding available for the provision of one community house (AHU 1995) whilst ATSIC Regional Council funding

allowed for another community house. These and two staff houses were supplied through the AHU tender process. Demand for housing far outweighed the supply which was shown in the following year when the then AHU received requests for housing for approximately 11 families and 10 elderly people. A housing needs survey was conducted, followed by a visit by the Minister for Housing and Urban Development (Maralinga Tjarutja 1996).

6.2.6 ATSIC - Army Community Assistance Program

As a result ATSIC - Army Community Assistance Program¹⁴⁵ (AACAP) became part of the delivery of housing and infrastructure under the Health Infrastructure Priority Program (HIPP) from 1997. The works included:

- an airstrip upgrade,
- the construction of three houses¹⁴⁶,
- the construction of internal roads,
- landscaping (including road demarcation, revegetation, fencing and dust control), and
- upgrading and construction of water storage tanks/shed tanks,
- a new refuse tip (Department of Defence 1997).

Additionally, the Army took over portions of work previously assigned to the Australian Property Group (APG) including:

- the power station and supply upgrade, and
- another water search (new bores and equipment) (Department of Defence 1997).

Future housing was to depend on the outcome of the water search, but the community wanted housing for elderly residents in temporary shelters regardless of this outcome. When the importance of the water search was indicated, the community suggested the provision of housing without reticulation should the water search be unsuccessful. ATSIC advised that all housing:

...must be constructed in accordance with normal building codes and types of accommodation enjoyed by the wider community, that being, suitable in design to the

community and environment and having appropriate wet areas in kitchen, laundry, toilets etcetera. (Haynes in Australian Army 1997, p.2)

The then AHU was also in the process of developing a skid mounted unserviced bedroom unit which could be placed as an alternative option, should water supplies be inadequate (Figure 26). This accommodation was designed for placement near an existing house to access ablutions and planned to alleviate acute accommodation shortfalls. Additionally it could be relocated if the need arose, through towing by the community tractor. Under AACAP, the preferred community option, Nomadic Housing, was the only option which satisfied the ATSI funding guidelines under NAHS (and therefore HIPP) was erected.

Other programs (including CDEP¹⁴⁷), provided further additions to community and infrastructure including:

- roofing over pre-existing ATCO office,
- hall repairs,
- construction of the garage facility,
- nursing staff accommodation (funded by Health and Family Services),
- construction of the school (funded by DECS),
- a playground, and
- dog and dust control measures.

From 1996 -1996 a total of nine houses were constructed for community and staff. In 1997, two houses were constructed for the community (Nomadic Model No. H3-35) which was significantly different to other housing supplied. The houses had three separate lockable bedrooms, a roof opening in the living area and an enclosed area with an earthen floor.

6.2.7 Other Accommodation Needs

Accommodation for the aged continued to be a high priority as the population of Oak Valley was ageing. Housing which had been provided was predominantly of a two or three bedroom variety which was usually occupied by families rather than the ageing

population. The supply of 'spider' tents continued through the then Aboriginal Housing Unit. These were often lost or given away¹⁴⁸ by older members of the community.

The need for independent living arrangements for the older members of the community was realised and the construction of an aged care centre through CSHA funding normally used for the construction of family housing occurred in 1997 (Rosenzweig pers. comm.).

The aged care centre provided:

- accommodation for four elderly residents through 2 duplex buildings,
- an administration building containing office, kitchen and day room, and
- an external ablutions block.

Again the buildings were steel framed and clad and supplied through Nomadic Enterprises.

Housing styles after 1998 reverted to more conventional housing types and continued to be supplied by Nomadic Enterprises Pty. Ltd. There are currently :

- 6 community houses,
- 2 sets of community duplexes,
- 6 staff houses (3 owned by the community), and
- 2 set of duplexes (teaching and nursing staff).

With the exception of the store and an adjacent transportable, all buildings in Oak Valley have been supplied through Nomadic Enterprises (Rosenzweig pers. comm.)

6.2.8 Current Arrangements

Under current funding arrangement Oak Valley (Maralinga) Inc. can access housing funding from two sources, NAHS administered by ATSIC and/or CHIP and CSHA funding administered by Aboriginal Housing Authority. It is unlikely, given the infrastructure investments from ATSIC in recent years, that the community would be able to access additional NAHS funding. The provision of new housing through CHIP and CSHA administered by the Aboriginal Housing Authority is possible. The community informally has indicated that they are unlikely to request additional housing in the short term given

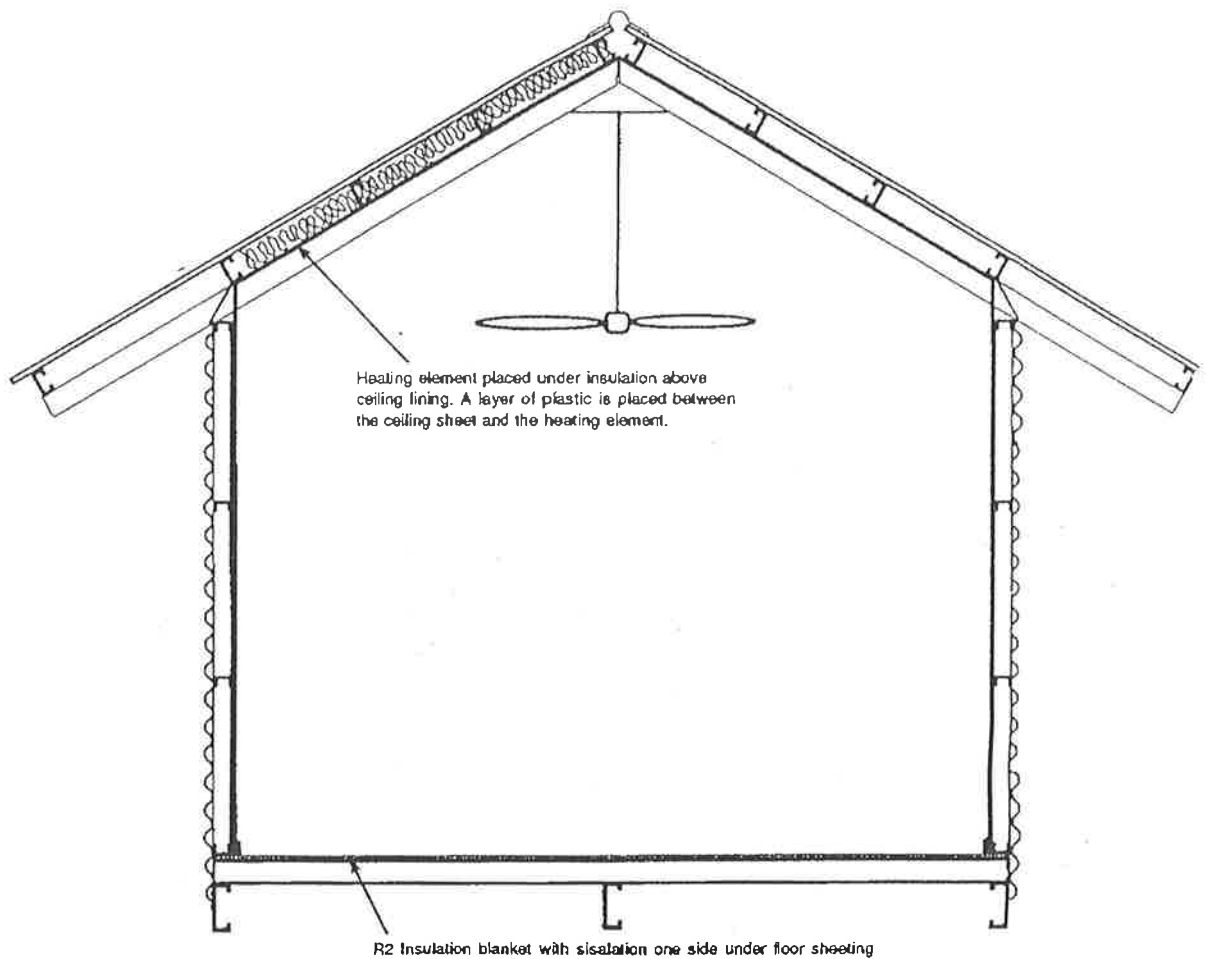


FIGURE 26 Proposal for Skid-mounted Unserviced Bedroom Unit

Rejected by ATSIC for housing on the grounds that they were dissimilar to mainstream housing styles. The units were later used for aged care centre at Oak Valley with the installation of ablution blocks nearby. In the aged care installation they were placed on a slab thereby making them immovable.

source : Department of Defence 1997

the limited water supplies (Borgas pers. comm.). All community housing supplied to date becomes the property of the community on completion.

Under arrangements currently being ratified by the Aboriginal Housing Authority in the period of flux in the changeover from the Aboriginal Housing Unit to the Aboriginal Housing Authority, it is likely that the community will be responsible for on-going repairs and maintenance for community housing. It is anticipated that this will be funded from the introduction of rental payments. Given the water shortages and the fluctuating population¹⁴⁹ this may be based on a cost per head within the community rather than the conventional rental payment for 'a house', in order to recover on-going costs for power/water (Borgas pers. comm.). Oak Valley continues to have a different scenario from non-Aboriginal public housing in that the on-going cost for services are higher than the initial capital cost for providing housing.

99 The proclamation of Sir John Hindmarsh was made on the Land of the Winnayrie group of Kurna people (Woolmer 1986) and sealed their fate. A portion of the proclamation read:

...and that they (the aborigines) will omit no opportunity of assisting me to fulfil His Majesty's most gracious and benevolent intentions to ward them by promoting their advancement in civilisation and ultimately under the blessing of divine providence their conversion to the Christian faith.... (Rowe 1959)

100 Note settlements which had their origins as stations are omitted.

101 Except Nepabunna where the children attend Leigh Creek School (Khan pers. comm.).

102 In many instances the bookkeeper and administrator are employed from outside the community. This may cause problems within the community especially where the administrator may wield a large amount of power within the community.

103 Except Raukkan and Gerard. It is unknown whether Koonibba has a store.

104 These are not the only reasons for reestablishing roots with traditional land.

105 The inheritance systems are quite complicated and vary throughout Australia, operating in varying patrilineal, matrilineal or other types of descent.

106 Although the family may invite other families to reside on the homeland.

107 Government policy directs that housing cannot be provided

...where secure water supply is not installed and/or guaranteed. (Aboriginal Housing Unit 1997)

Early progress reports concerning Oak Valley stated

...the provision of adequate potable water to the community is the joint responsibility of the State and Commonwealth Government Health Services (State Aboriginal Co-ordinating Committee 1985)

-
- 108 Also referred to literature as East-West or Trans-Continental Railway.
- 109 Daisy Bates did not attempt to convert the Aboriginal people to Christianity. As the holder of the title honorary 'Protector' of the Aborigines in Western Australia at one time, she distributed rations, clothes and medical attention. She had trained in journalism and contributed regularly to various publications. Her reports of cannibalism among Aboriginal people in the area brought her work into disrepute in academic circles at the time although she still wrote for the popular press (Salter 1971).
- 110 Daisy Bates was happy to allow interchange for events such as the visit of H.R.H., the Duke of Gloucester or other such events which would enhance her social standing.
- 111 Aboriginal people attempted to sell artefacts to passengers on the train and their appearance on the tracks added to the 'adventure of the journey'.
- 112 Current usage name Kokatha. (Goodfield et al. 1991).
- 113 Tests included how nuclear bombs would behave in an accident.
- 114 Plutonium is an extremely toxic substance:
...a piece the size of a speck of dirt lodged in the lung will give a person a 50/50 chance of getting lung cancer.
and It
...will remain dangerous for at least 240,000 years permanently contaminating the land...
(Goodfield et al. 1991, p.29)
- 115 The Atomic Safety Committee fostered views that the location, movements and habits of Aboriginal people were closely monitored. The appearance of Edie Milpuddie and her family at the Marcoo Crater in 1957 was a great shock to the concerned government authorities and became known as the 'Pom Pom Incident' (Mattingley & Hampton 1988).
- 116 Colona was a major sheep property in the vicinity of Yalata. The area of land was excluded from the government reserve area allocated to the Aboriginal reserve primarily as it had agricultural viability. Colona is now owned by Yalata Aboriginal Community.
- 117 Dr Archie Barton AM is the administrator of Maralinga Tjarutja at the time of writing.
- 118 Many community members speak a dialect of Pitjantjatjara predominantly as their first language.
- 119 Apart from the ceremonies contained within Aboriginal spirituality which are deemed intrinsic for the continuing well-being of the land, the lack of tending by Aboriginal people has had several severe detrimental effects for future settlement on the land. Nurturing areas of water collection such as soaks on a continual basis is imperative for the continual accessibility to water. Many soaks filled, and are now non-existent as a result of the inability of the Aboriginal owners being unable to maintain them (Finlayson pers. comm.).
- 120 The opening of Nundroo and the sealing of the Nullarbor Highway were to a large degree responsible for the introduction of alcohol to Yalata. The community had petitioned unsuccessfully to move back to Ooldea prior to the Nullarbor Highway being sealed (O'Shea 1984)
- 121 Negotiation focussed on two areas: the inclusion of Emu in the Land Grant (excluded in some drafts probably due to concerns on radio-active contamination) and matters of access (O'Shea 1984).
- 122 Including mining companies.
- 123 The report shows 95 square kilometres still contaminated (Goodfield et al. 1991).

-
- 124 Oak Valley was originally settled as a bush camp for people to live camp style (Brady pers. comm.)
- 125 The community at this time had no outside assistance at all. The primary problem was the need to cart all water to the location. Environmental damage through the activities of mining exploration had occurred approximately 30 years earlier when the base rock was penetrated by drilling, the sinking of wells and other interference with the natural collection of water. This led to the drying up of traditional sources of water (Maralinga Lands Parliamentary Committee 1987).
- 126 Interestingly the cost of contents of the 10,000 gallon tankers was \$40.00 whilst the cost of transport to Watson, some considerable distance from Oak Valley, was a further \$1,700.00 (prices circa 1985) (State Aboriginal Co-ordinating Committee 1985).
- 127 The Aquitaine road into Lake Dey Dey is named after the French mining company which built it during uranium exploration (Davis & Kirke 1991).
- 128 The tent pegs were lost and the posts used as firewood, lost, or broken through moving about. The reappropriation of the posts as firewood is an interesting phenomenon, as this occurs with materials on more permanent structures in some remote communities. Through the literature the practice appears to be related to the ability of some remote Aboriginal people to use materials in the immediate environment flexibly to perform a variety of tasks at hand.
- 129 Considerable energy was required on the part of the community members to use this block for washing. Water had to be carted via trailer tank, a key obtained for the diesel generator for pumping and gas bottles for water heating. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the ablutions block was used infrequently due to the complexity of the process (Eco-tech 1990).
- 130 The population had two options to obtain stores. They could order \$50.00 or \$100.00 boxes through Yalata, (with no control over contents) or they could take the 160 km journey to purchase at the Tea and Sugar train. Both options are extremely expensive to the population, which is mostly dependent on Centrelink payments.
- 131 Transport between the two settlements must be provided privately. There are some opportunities to get a lift with school or nursing staff.
- 132 Nursing staff stayed at Oak Valley in a caravan for a week at a time. Staffing was difficult to maintain due to the remote location.
- 133 Schooling occurred under a tree with a teacher from Yalata, on an irregular basis.
- 134 There was some uncertainty within the community with some members wishing to retain Oak Valley as a bush camp where people could continue to live camp style without infrastructure (Brady pers. comm.).
- 135 The dates coincide with the departure of the non-Aboriginal community adviser Steve Hayes and the decision of the community to employ a community member as the administrator.
- 136 Loosely described as the community hall.
- 137 This program is described in a later section.
- 138 Australian Property Group is the business unit within the Commonwealth Department of Administrative Services.
- 139 Nine holes were drilled within 10 km radius of Oak Valley with only three completed as wells. Salinity levels

of completed wells is high and water from these sources is used predominantly for washing (South Australian Health Commission 1991).

140 The original work program for the supply of power was to be a hybrid system using wind, solar and diesel generators. Allocation of funds was insufficient and the revised system is diesel operated (Australian Property Group 1997).

141 This community plan was incorrect. The community was resurveyed in 1999 and an accurate town plan now exists (Figure 23).

142 The storage of inflammable liquids in Aboriginal communities is a considerable health issue with regard to possible abuse. The social problems of petrol sniffing in remote communities are well documented (e.g. Brady & Torzillo 1995).

143 Funds for this housing are allocated from the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement. Further negotiation by the Maralinga Tjarutja saw the provision of community and staff housing on a one for one basis ratio (Barton pers. comm.).

144 The rapidly depleting supplies of wood for the construction of wiltjas were a primary motivation behind this exercise.

145 The ATSIC-Army Community Assistance Program (AACAP) originated from an approach

...to the Prime Minister by the members from the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation in 1996

(Department of Defence 1997)

to provide greater value for money from NAHS funding. The project was funded by 50/50 by ATSIC (NAHS), and the Federal Department of Health and Family Services with the Department of Defence contributing labour (ATSIC 1998a). Oak Valley was one of the first six projects completed by AACAP with others being undertaken in the more northern areas of Australia. A benefit of the AACAP to the Department of Defence was reported as the provision of training to personnel in airstrip and road construction. It must be left to the reader to ascertain the location of projects in relation to areas of military significance.

146 These houses were delivered by the then AHU as a service provider. Some discrepancies in the number of houses to have been constructed under the AACAP occur in the literature. Documentation suggests four houses were to be constructed initially (Department of Defence 1997) but one house is omitted from documentation. The writer presumes that this was an error in the works schedule or that one house designated for construction was a staff house and was completed by the appropriate funding body.

147 The Community Development Employment Program. (CDEP) aims to provide training and employment options for Aboriginal people living in remote communities. Wages are issued to approximately the same level as unemployment benefits and are provided by Centrelink. The program also aims to provide community involvement, an alternative to unemployment benefits and 'ownership' of the completed infrastructure and construction projects.

148 Anecdotal evidence suggested that kin obligations resulted in the tarpaulins components of the 'spider' tents being reappropriated to other family members and often leaving elderly members of the community without any accommodation (Khan pers. comm.). One possible solution to the reappropriation of the 'spider' tents is currently mooted. It has been suggested by the Aged Centre at Oak Valley that the tents are stencilled

with 'aged care' on the sides to prevent other family members from requesting for them.

149 The population of the community fluctuates from 200 to approximately 1,000 people at certain times such as a recent football match (Buchanan pers. comm.).



SECTION 7 HOUSING AT OAK VALLEY

7.0 INTRODUCTION

This section describes the housing types at Oak Valley and identifies cultural, environmental and other related housing issues related to occupying various types of housing. Housing types at Oak Valley include:

- moveable housing¹⁵⁰ (Figures 27, 28 & 29),
- community-built shelters (Figure 30),
- the aged care centre¹⁵¹, and
- Nomadic Housing (Figures 31 & 32).

Permanent housing stock consists of:

- 3 staff houses,
- 2 sets of staff duplexes,
- 9 community houses,
- 2 sets of community duplexes, and
- an aged-care centre incorporating 2 aged care duplexes.

There is a separation of permanent community and staff housing into two areas. The community has three houses which are located among staff housing to accommodate essential staff¹⁵². Housing has all been supplied by Nomadic Enterprises Pty. Ltd, and constructed using AHA processes. Some community housing has been furnished using funds from the Maralinga Piling Trust¹⁵³.

Informal interviews were conducted with occupants to identify housing issues.

Observations were made of the following types of housing:

- moveable housing,
- community housing (Nomadic Model No. H3-35),

- duplexes (Nomadic Model HD-403),
- other community housing (Nomadic Model No. H3-29), and
- staff housing (Nomadic Model No.s H3-29 and H-401).

7.1 MOVEABLE HOUSING

7.1.1 Location

At the time of visits to the community (August to September 1999), camps were located around Kali Street towards the southern outskirts of the community. There was evidence of three vacated camps on API Wani Street¹⁵⁴ (Figure 25). Camps at Oak Valley move periodically, depending on a number of factors¹⁵⁵.

The use of other types of moveable housing, such as car bodies and caravans appeared to be more permanent. Their location appeared to relate to the occupants' relationship to the residents of adjacent housing¹⁵⁶ and appeared opportunistic and not available to all members of the community.

7.1.2 Features

It is difficult to discuss one type of moveable housing in isolation, as combinations of housing styles were used¹⁵⁷ and included:

- wiltjas and yuus constructed from found materials,
- wiltjas supplied through the Aboriginal Housing Authority, and
- shelters constructed by the community.

Wiltjas were constructed from found materials and used combinations of materials from around the community¹⁵⁸ with notably popular building materials being reinforcing wire and corrugated iron. The wiltjas supplied by the AHA consist of a galvanised frame secured with a central fixing plate with a tarpaulin cover with two zip openings (Figures 29, 33 and 34). The wiltjas come in two sizes, the smaller version standing about 1.5m high and the larger version standing approximately 2.5 m high. Shelters were recently constructed by the community in the southern area to service transient occupants.



FIGURE 27: Wiltja constructed of various materials including vegetation, tarpaulins and reinforcing mesh. Note: galvanised tucker box in the foreground to secure foodstuffs.



FIGURE 28 : Car body being used as housing in conjunction with community-built shelter. In this example, ablutions and other services are available at the adjoining house.

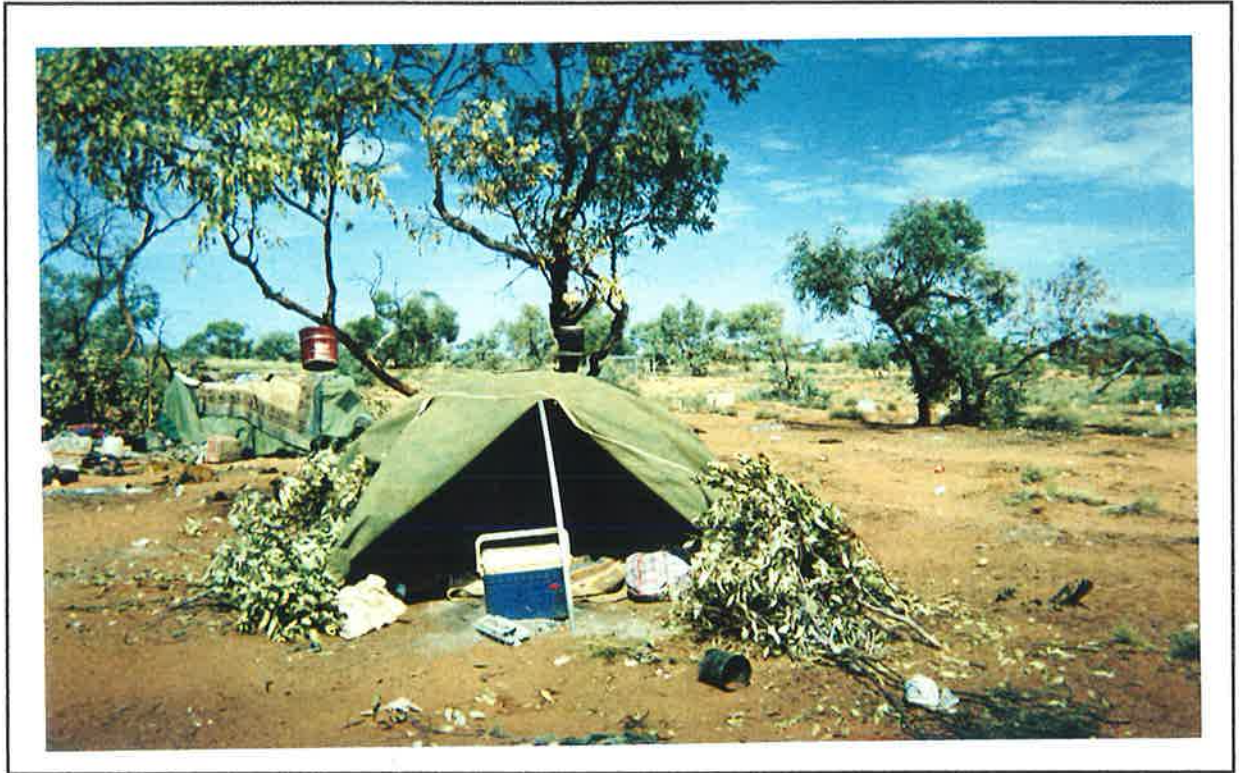


FIGURE 29 : Wiltjas supplied through the Aboriginal Housing Authority. The wiltjas come in two sizes. In this instance the larger style has been constructed on a smaller scale using only several portions of the frame. The tarpaulin cover can be opened with two zips for climate control. The vegetation around the base is to eliminate draughts. Note: Food secured from dogs in buckets in tree in background.

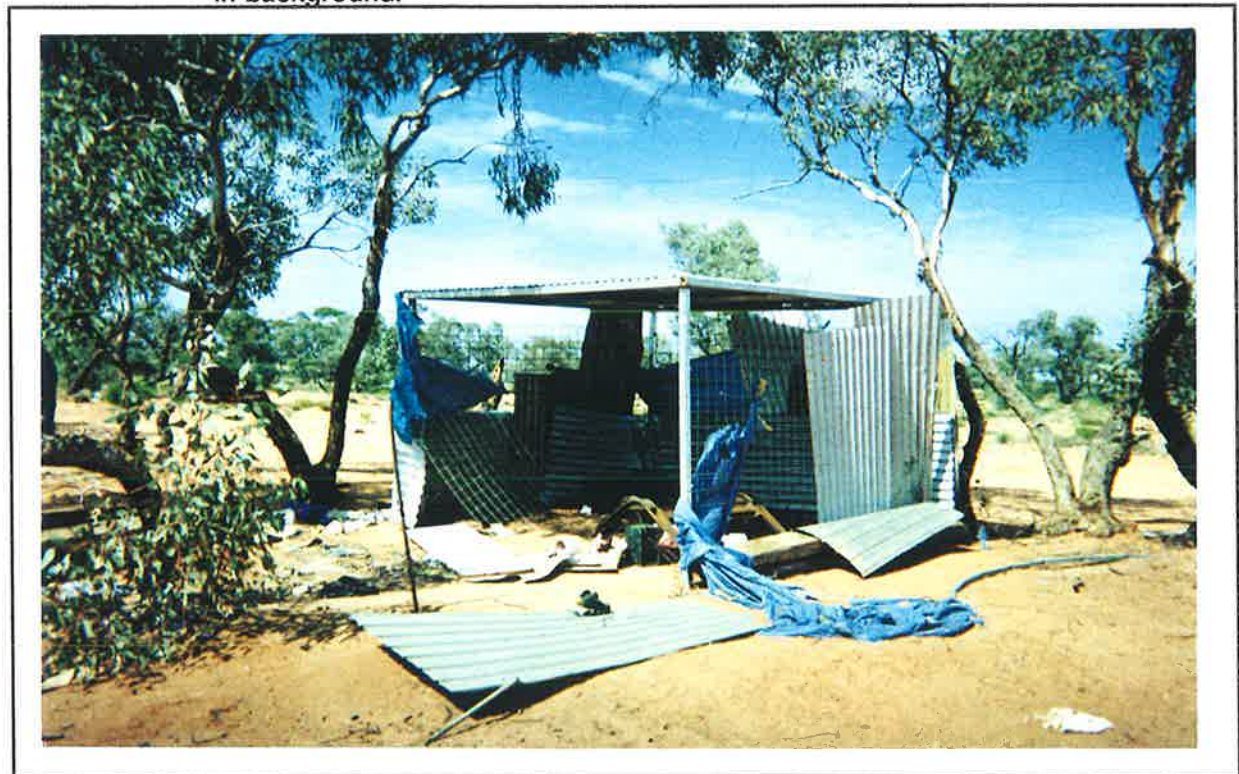


FIGURE 30 : Shelters constructed by the community for transient population. In this example, additional weatherproofing has been added through the use of galvanised iron, reinforcing mesh and fabric.



FIGURE 31 : Nomadic housing (Model H3-35) constructed in 1997. Features include three lockable bedrooms, separate kitchen and living area incorporating earthen floor. Ablution/laundry block is located to the left and a pit toilet is located at the rear of the property.



FIGURE 32 : Nomadic Housing at Oak Valley (Model H3-29). Ablutions/laundry block adjoins rear verandah. Pit toilet is located at the rear of the property. All fencing is constructed of reinforcing mesh.

Services available to camps are minimal with access to community and aged-care ablutions and washing facilities. Water for drinking is generally kept by campers in plastic bottles, and cooking is done on small fires.

7.1.3 Usage

People using the wiltja supplied by AHA tended to use the smaller version¹⁵⁹. The wiltjas supplied by AHA in actual use were in reasonable condition. It was difficult to close the entrance of the smaller wiltjas with the zip fastener due to dust accumulation. From anecdotal evidence, it appears the doorway is left open in most instances and a fire lit in or near the entrance at night.

7.1.4 Housing Issues

The occupants of moveable housing were predominantly elderly members of the community. Occupants who were interviewed did not identify any difficulties or issues in occupying this type of housing. The writer observed a variety of issues related to living in moveable housing which include:

- access to water,
- access to ablutions,
- securing food,
- sharing resources and housing with extended family,
- washing clothing, bedding and cooking utensils,
- securing possessions,
- keeping warm or cool,
- keeping dry,
- keeping free of dust,
- keeping clean,
- canine to human infections, and
- maintaining health and hygiene.

From observation, it was clear that there were major impacts on health and that other

housing options need to be available as required (i.e. aged care and family accommodation) at times of illness or inclement weather. From anecdotal evidence, it would appear that many wiltjas supplied by the AHA are re-appropriated by other family members and are taken from the community¹⁶⁰. Tarpaulin covers appear to be most commonly re-appropriated or are lost or damaged¹⁶¹. Kinship obligations were identified in interviews with staff as a major cause of dismantling wiltja covers. Some pressure may be placed on elderly family members to live camp style and to allow younger family members to occupy housing.

7.1.5 Aspirations of the Occupants

Most of the people interviewed at Oak Valley indicated that they were living in camps from choice¹⁶². One person interviewed had a house in the community but chose to live camp style as they enjoyed the lifestyle. Many of the people interviewed living camp style had minimal permanent housing experience and/or knowledge and wished to maintain the aspects of camp life (especially the social aspects). None of the people interviewed living in camps wanted change their housing, although living conditions appeared very austere.

7.2 COMMUNITY BUILT SHELTERS

7.2.1 Location and Features

Community built shelters are located around the southern area of Oak Valley.

The shelters are 3 metres square with 4 supporting galvanised steel columns and a roof. No flooring or walls are provided. Additional weatherproofing is provided by the users through the use of found materials.

7.2.3 Usage and Housing Issues

The shelters were used in conjunction with other types of moveable housing as a source of shelter. They were also used as a method of securing food from dogs¹⁶³. For people living camp style there are health advantages in relocating camp sites periodically¹⁶⁴. The community built shelters may mean that a camp does not move or is located



FIGURE 33 : Larger wiltja frame in place at Oak Valley. No damage to frames was observed. These larger frames may be difficult for elderly residents to carry and construct. In this instance the tarpaulin was torn.

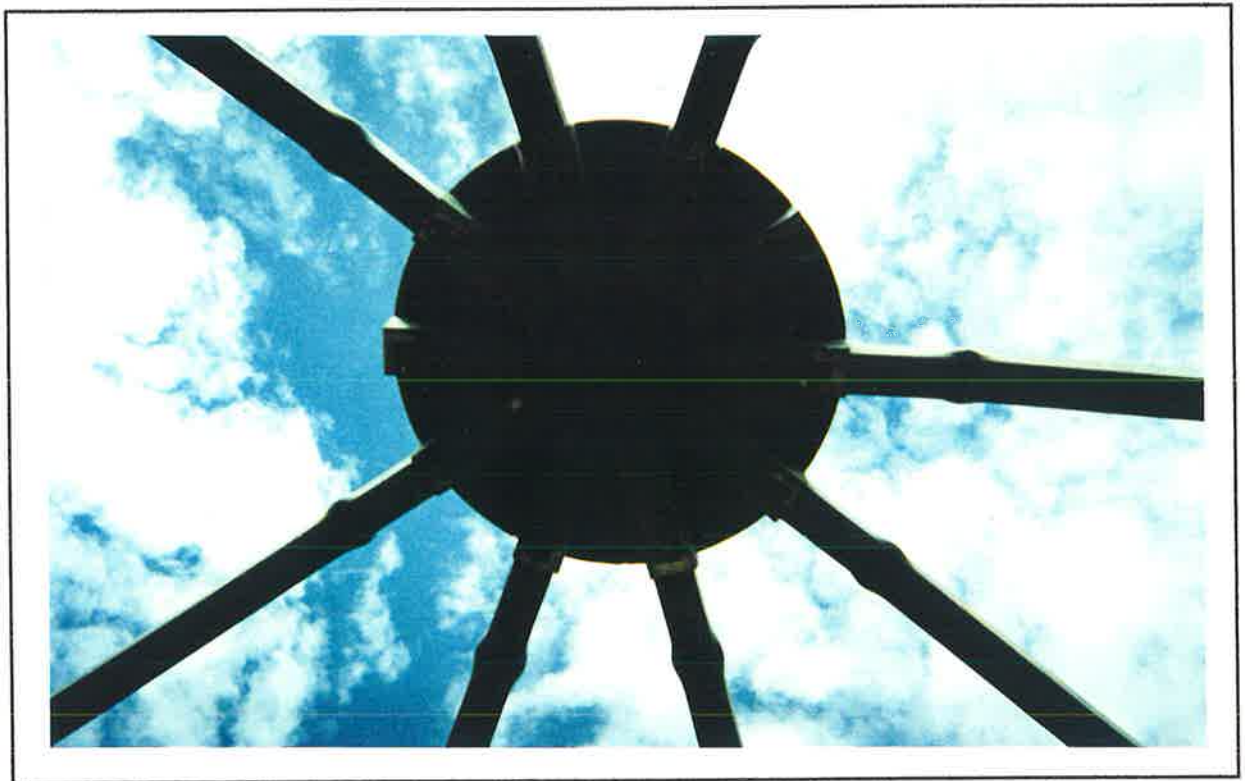


FIGURE 34 : Detail of central joint of wiltja frame. These are relatively easy to use and the wiltja is stable with two supports missing.

continuously in the same area . Unless cleaned of surplus found materials periodically the shelters can also present health and safety risks. Other considerations which apply to shelters are similar to those relating to moveable housing.

7.3 COMMUNITY HOUSING (NOMADIC MODEL NO. H3-35)

7.3.1 Location

Two houses constructed in 1997 are located along Kali Street (Figure 25), a distance of approximately 400 metres from the staff housing.

7.3.2 Features

The two community houses erected in 1997 differ significantly differences from houses, although their exterior appearance is similar. Nomadic Model No. H3-35 (Figures 31 and 35) consists of four individual rooms which are designated as three bedrooms and a kitchen. All rooms have lockable doors with an inward or outward opening action. All flooring is painted concrete with an enclosed area adjoining the rooms which contains no flooring. Walls are provided on three sides and a hole is located in the roof of this area to allow the escape of smoke. The ablutions/laundry area is located to the left of the house adjoining the verandah and the pit toilet is located at the rear of the property. The houses are neither air conditioned nor heated.

This housing design was developed by the Australian Property Group (Rosenzweig 1999) to suit the needs of the occupants who were predominantly experienced in a camp life style. The lockable bedrooms were designed to be used for sleeping and the sandy enclosure was proposed for having a fire during inclement weather. These houses incorporate features of Aboriginal housing trialed and rejected by Aboriginal people in the late 1970s. Evident comparisons arise with Howroyd's Laverton House and other 'culturally appropriate' housing. The enclosed use of earthen floors and individual lockable rooms have all been used and rejected in the past.

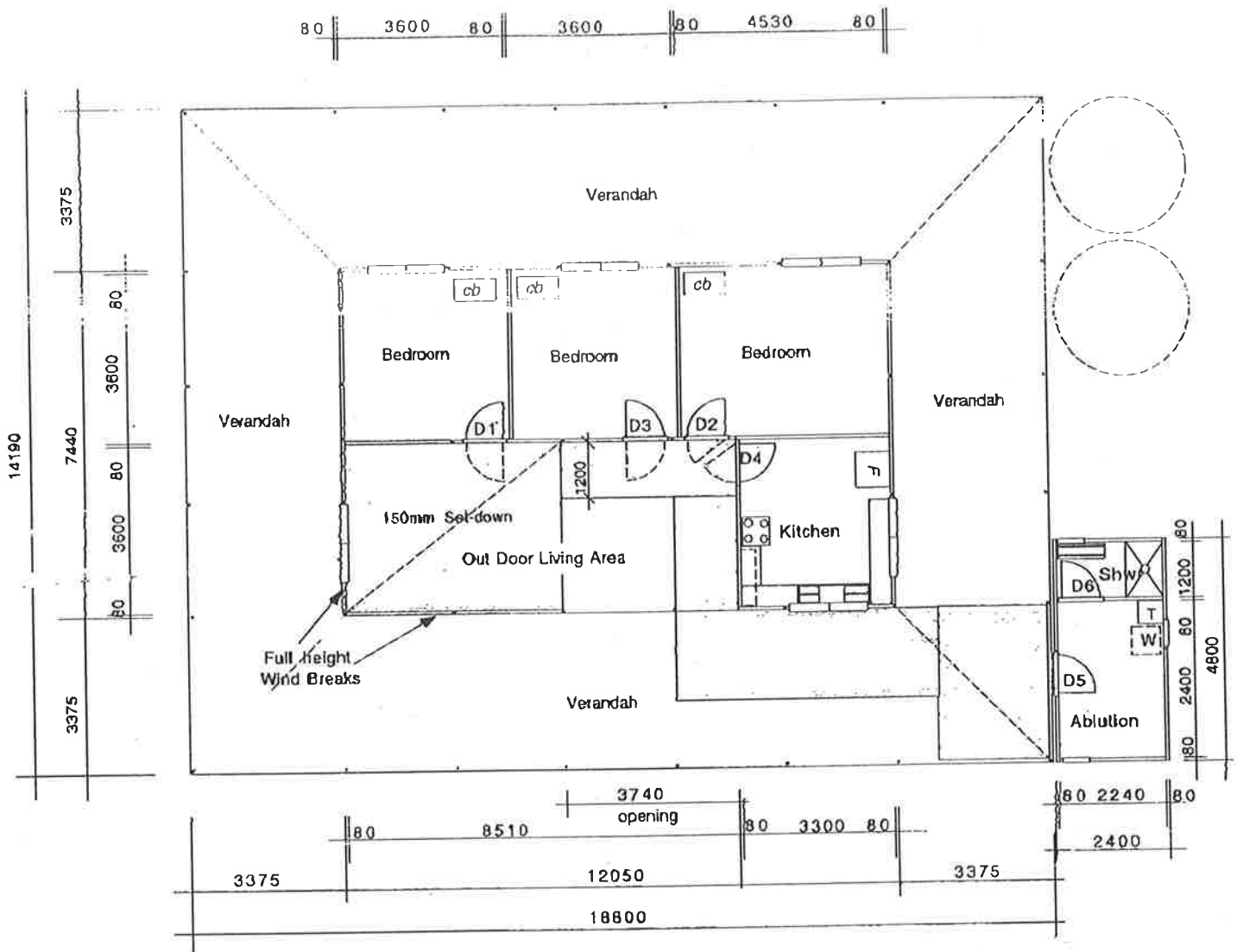


FIGURE 35 : Floor Plan Nomadic Model No. H3-35

These houses were supplied through ATSIC processes and were designed to incorporate features to allow people living camp style to live in permanent housing. Many of the floor plan features are similar to Howroyd's Laverton House (Section 1) and other experimental or 'culturally appropriate housing' extensively critiqued and rejected in the 1970s. Occupants noted a desire for 'proper' housing akin to urban housing at the time of the study.

source : Rosenzweig 1999

7.3.3 Usage

The two houses were observed to be in fair to poor state¹⁶⁵ and only one was occupied¹⁶⁶ by people who preferred to live camp style under the verandah and use the house for:

- storage of possessions,
- sleeping during colder weather, and
- some cooking.

The residents of this housing felt that their houses performed poorly for the first two purposes. One of the two houses has been abandoned by the occupants who were living camp style within the community.

7.3.4 Housing Issues

The occupants indicated a number of difficulties in occupying this housing, these included:

- keeping warm or cool,
- a large and fluctuating number of people occupying housing,
- washing clothes and bedding,
- maintaining possessions, and
- sharing housing and resources with extended family.

Additionally the writer observed a number of issues relating to the housing including:

- dust control,
- the possibility of canine to human infections,
- the possibility of human to human infections,
- the possibility of smoke inhalation,
- obtaining household effects, and
- minor damage through overuse.

The Nomadic Model No. H3-35 presents serious health concerns for occupants. Living camp style in confined built spaces with a small roof opening may lead to smoke inhalation. Living camp style inside does not present opportunities for clean sand free of faeces nor does it to avoid other potential health risks. Other areas would be extremely

difficult to keep free of dust. Bedrooms are not orientated to take any advantage of prevailing winds and have little ventilation. The housing was reported to be intolerably hot in summer and very cold in winter. Poor thermal performance during winter would be exacerbated by the occupants' lack of furniture and the absence of any floor coverings. The enclosure of the fire area does not allow the residents to interact with the community or to view their surroundings.

The difficulties of combining living camp style with having housing responsibilities was illustrated by one group of elderly occupants who had no furniture, as their possessions had been re-appropriated while they were absent from the community. No screens were observed on the house and it was reported¹⁶⁷ that most internal doors were broken. Other occupants reported that the housing was hot in summer and cold in winter and expressed a desire for radiant heating and air conditioning to be supplied. It was further reported that it was difficult to prevent dust entry into the house and that dogs normally occupied the house when the residents were inside¹⁶⁸.

7.3.4 Aspirations of Occupants

The residents interviewed showed a desire for 'a proper house'. In particular, they desired a brick house with floor coverings, heating, cooling and a flushing toilet. They particularly expressed desires for amenities such as:

- a washing machine,
- a television, and
- furniture.

When asked further about these desires the occupants indicated that these items were intrinsically part of the house and should be supplied with the house¹⁶⁹. The residents interviewed did not wish to change their lifestyle substantially. They did desire to have the option of having the amenities found in non-Aboriginal housing and to combine both lifestyles at times¹⁷⁰.

7.4 OTHER COMMUNITY HOUSING

7.4.1 Location

Other community housing were constructed between 1996 and 1999 and are located along Kali and AP Wani Streets (Figure 25).

7.4.2 Features

Community housing occupied by residents consists of 4 houses and 4 individual duplexes (Figures 32 and 36). Two houses are unoccupied¹⁷¹. The housing has:

- an internal combustion fire/oven in the living area,
- air conditioning,
- steel food lockers supplied to kitchens,
- areas of verandahs enclosed with reinforcing mesh (duplexes),
- ablutions located at the rear of the property, and
- pathing between toilet and house.

Houses have three bedrooms and a living /kitchen/dining area. The two sets of duplexes were constructed in 1998 (Rosenzweig pers. comm.) and were in good condition. The duplexes have the same design features as the houses apart from having two bedrooms with a party wall adjoining the two living areas. The rear and front verandahs have a partition wall to provide privacy for ablutions/laundry areas and clear delineation of separate properties¹⁷².

7.4.3 Usage

Most of the residents appeared to be living within the houses. Most had fire areas in the yard. During the visits, fires were the only activity observed in the yards, other outside activities (e.g., children's games and maintenance to vehicles) were observed to take place outside the yards of the houses¹⁷³. Many occupants had housing experience and/or knowledge obtained through relatives or by living at other places. Some of the people interviewed had large families, as well as kin visiting from other areas (e.g. Yalata) periodically.

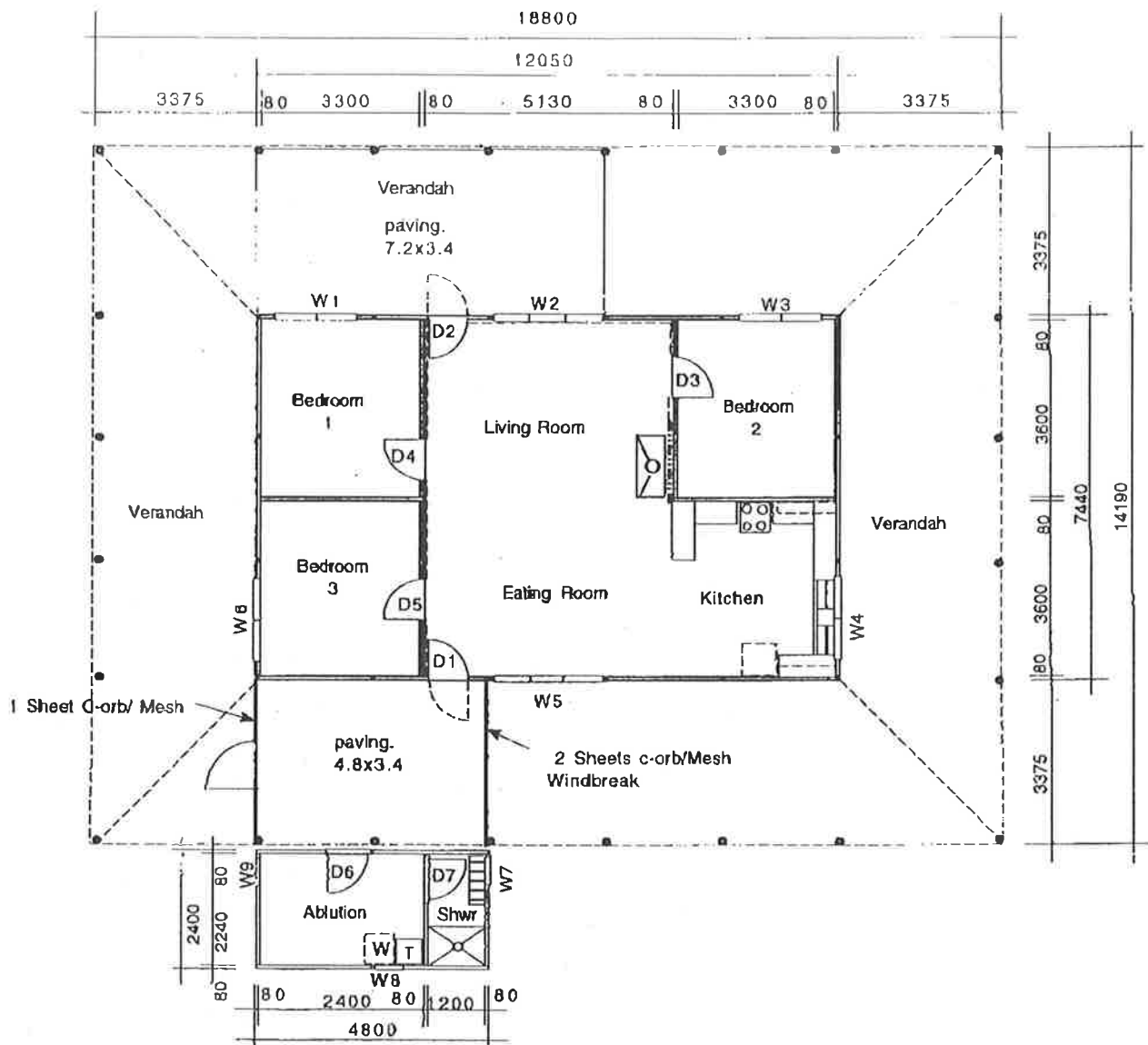


FIGURE 36 : Floor Plan Nomadic Housing Model H3-29

This and a similar duplex model have been used for all other community and staff housing in Oak Valley. The model is air conditioned and heated via a slow combustion stove with baker's oven. The model incorporates certain recommendations of the Report of U.P.K. (Nganampa Health Council Inc. et al. 1987), such as robust construction and isolation of wet and living areas.

source : Rosenzweig 1999

In some instances the people interviewed suggested that they preferred to sleep near other people. These sleeping practices¹⁷⁴, combined with the following factors:

- poor ventilation,
- small room sizes,
- a number of people occupying the room,
- the sharing of sleeping areas with dogs, and
- the presence of infectious diseases,

may exacerbate levels of infectious disease and/or parasitic infections.

7.4.4 Housing Issues

Housing issues were identified by the occupants as:

- keeping warm,
- sharing housing and resources with extended family, and
- dust control.

Additionally, the writer observed potential housing issues such as:

- minor damage through overuse,
- minor damage through children's activities,
- damage through misuse
- securing possessions,
- the possibility of human to human infections, and
- the possibility of canine to human infections.

7.4.5 Aspirations for Housing

The occupants interviewed were generally satisfied with the housing. They expressed desires for:

- larger houses,
- floor coverings, and
- radiant heating.

The occupants interviewed were happy with the thermal performance of housing during

hot weather. Air conditioning, insulation and verandahs are used to control temperature. The houses take little advantage of prevailing winds. The occupants indicated that the houses get very cold at times and that they desired radiant heating¹⁷⁵. Some people could not gather firewood through age, infirmity or lack of appropriate tools to use the combustion heater. Another desire for the housing was the supply of vacuum cleaners. It was assumed that amenities are part of the house and therefore should be supplied with the house.

The occupants wished to have floor coverings (i.e. linoleum) which was more consistent with housing found in urban areas. Most of the occupants wished to have housing which was akin as possible to housing styles seen in urban areas. Most occupants would like housing to be larger¹⁷⁶ to accommodate family members. One person had erected a wiltja as supplied by the Aboriginal Housing Authority in their yard to accommodate visiting family members .

7.5 STAFF HOUSING

7.5.1 Location

Housing for staff is located along Oak Drive (Figure 25). Two sets of duplexes and six individual Nomadic houses (Figure 32 and 36) are occupied by:

- the teaching staff,
- the nursing staff, and
- the aged-care co-ordinator.

Occupants in this area are predominantly from outside the community and are likely to be from non-Aboriginal backgrounds¹⁷⁷. Some of this housing was provided by the various responsible departments (i.e Health and Education) whereas three houses are owned by the community for the accommodation of essential people and were provided through AHA processes.

7.5.2 Features

Staff housing in Oak Valley is identical to the community housing, being either three-bedroom houses or two-bedroom duplexes with the addition of front and rear verandah enclosures on some housing for additional security. In South Australia, deliberate moves have been made on the part of service providers of Aboriginal housing to encourage the responsible departments (e.g DEET or Health) to use the same housing models used for community housing¹⁷⁸ in remote localities. In the past there has been considerable disparity between community and staff housing in some remote localities causing dissent¹⁷⁹.

7.5.3 Usage

The majority of occupants are employed and spend considerably less time at their accommodation than the residents. Staff tend to spend more time in housing than people in urban areas, often returning to their house to eat meals or to use ablutions. Staff often accommodate visitors to the community as there is no other suitable accommodation¹⁸⁰.

7.5.4 Housing Issues

The main issues identified by occupiers of staff housing are related to dust control. Otherwise the occupants felt that the housing satisfied other environmental considerations. Behaviour adjustments had been made by some staff to low technology approaches to housing (e.g. separation of ablution and housing, and pit toilets).

7.5.5 Aspirations for Housing

Generally staff interviewed were very satisfied with the housing. In particular, the staff were satisfied with the thermal performance of housing. Some had added improvements to the properties including:

- re-use of grey water,
- vegetable patches, and
- the laying of reinforcing wire to stop their dogs digging holes near

houses.

Suggestions for changes to housing were generally focussed on achieving greater environmentally appropriate housing and included:

- reducing door gaps to reduce dust entry, and
- the installation of additional rainwater tanks.

7.6 OTHER ISSUES

As described in Section 4, people rarely articulate features of their own culture, and in some instances, offence may be taken through asking direct questions on cultural issues. Through interviews with the staff at Oak Valley, Yalata and Maralinga Tjarutja, a number of cultural and environmental issues were presented in regard to community housing. Through this method, some additional cultural and environmental factors influencing housing at Oak Valley were recorded .

7.6.1 Child Rearing Practices

Staff interviewed stated that minor damage to housing and other infrastructure often occurs as a result of children's play. The damage in most instances does not usually destroy the object but tends to render it useless. Examples of damage include:

- breakage of solar panels through stone damage, and
- breakage of taps on tanks.

The majority of damage results from stones launched by hand or shanghais. It was observed that children at Oak Valley are not directly supervised by an adult for major periods of the day. At the time of visits, they tended to gather as a group and play well into the evening. The interviews with staff revealed that the damage sustained through children's play tends to be cyclic and centred in particular areas. The maintenance response has been to wait prior to repair.

7.6.2 Death Customs

Staff explained some significant practices which had occurred in response to the recent

death of a community member. These included :

- all possessions of the deceased (including furniture and electrical items) had been burnt immediately following the death,
- the community house in which the death had occurred had been reoccupied following a previous death,
- the community had established camps outside the perimeters of the community in the grieving period following the death,
- many of the people had left the community and would not return until the wind had erased the deceased footprints from the sand, and
- a number of members of the community had asked for sand to be deposited into their yards to erase the deceased footprints,

The staff interviewed felt that it was unlikely that the house would be reoccupied under the given circumstances and that it may be prudent to dismantle the house for re-use in another community.

7.6.3 Employment

The majority of the residents of Oak Valley are elderly and do not participate in paid employment. CDEP is limited, affecting the ability of the community to operate repairs and maintenance programs and/or the need for the community to employ outside labour. Sources of individual residents' income is unknown, but would appear to be limited to Centrelink payments. The ability of residents to acquire furniture, fittings and conduct minor improvements to properties may be limited by income.

7.6.4 Dust

Housing shows large accumulations of dust on the exteriors. Some dust control measures to housing include:

- the enclosure of verandah spaces with wire and hessian (staff housing and duplexes),
- the use of screens on windows and doors, and

- low maintenance interior materials to increase capacity to clear dust.

It was observed that fencing, revegetation or re-use of grey water were not used to control dust. It was observed that people living camp style had almost continual exposure to dust. Children's play was a minimal generator of dust.

7.6.5 Dogs

It was identified through interviews with staff and observation that housing is not used extensively to preclude dogs. People living a combined camp life style adjacent to houses tended to have large number of dogs occupying the house with the resident. Fencing was not observed to be used to preclude dogs from any properties.

7.7 SUMMARY

It can be seen that there are significant differences among Oak Valley residents including:

- differences in lifestyles,
- variations in housing styles,
- varying amounts of housing experience and/or knowledge, and
- differences in level of services and amenities.

These differences influence occupant evaluation of housing. A number of common factors were observed within the use of community housing. These were:

- fluctuating numbers of people occupying housing,
- large numbers of people occupying housing periodically,
- minimal yard development,

and

- minor damage through children's activities.

An evaluation of housing in relation to the interview and observation results is conducted in Section 8.

¹⁵⁰ Moveable housing types include the following:

- wiltjas and yuus constructed from found materials

- car bodies,
- caravans,
- wiltjas supplied through the Aboriginal Housing Authority, and
- shelters constructed by the community.

151 This accommodation is outside the scope of the study of the study.

152 The community housing located with staff housing accommodates the:

- the Store Manager,
- the Essential Services Officer, and
- the Works Manager.

These positions may be occupied by people from outside the community (see Section 4). This housing will be considered as staff housing for the purposes of this study.

153 The Maralinga Piling Trust contains the compensation monies in accordance with the Maralinga Royal Commission. It is unknown if the supply of furniture through this means will be on-going (Borgas pers. comm.).

154 These had been vacated several weeks before, after the death of an elder. There were several canvas wiltja frames present at these sites and other frames were present closer to the community services (ie., toilets and the store) indicating former camp sites.

155 Camps moved periodically due to a number of factors including:

- location of other semi-permanent shelters (i.e. community-built shelters, car bodies),
- setting up camps for specific purposes (e.g. 'sorry' camps),
- changes in the inter-relationships of occupants,
- accessibility to services (e.g. ablutions),
- relationships to people in permanent housing, and
- adjacent natural resources (e.g., firewood, shade, food sources).

156 One car body was used as housing by a resident wishing for some independence whilst wishing to remain close to family members. A caravan was used by a community member desirous of more permanent housing within the community.

157 For example in one instance, community-built shelters were used to secure food from dogs. Tarpaulins from wiltjas supplied by AHA were used in combination with found materials to build wiltjas. In other instances wiltjas supplied by AHA were used with a combination of found materials to exclude draughts.

158 For the health and safety of the community and aesthetic appeal, the community should consider the collection of reusable materials (e.g. wiltjas frame and tarpaulins, galvanised iron) from vacated camps for reuse. Weathering and destruction of these materials, unless stored, may render them useless for reuse.

159 A number of the larger version of wiltjas were located around the community but unused. The frame of the larger version was too large for many of the elderly users to manage and transport and they preferred to have individual wiltjas placed near each other.

160 Due to kinship obligations, some occupants of the wiltjas may be obliged to give wiltjas to other family members. Staff of the aged-care centre wish to stencil the wiltjas with 'aged care' to reduce this practice.

161 Staff indicated the desire to have a roll of tarpaulin within the community that could be cut to length on

demand rather than fitting covers. They felt they could then provide waterproofing in camp situations without using the available wiltja covers. This would reduce the aesthetic appeal of the wiltja but should be considered for flexibility and cost-effectiveness. This would require an on-going supply.

162 In some instances they did not wish to re-enter the community due to a recent death.

163 Food is placed on roof of community built shelters.

164 In particular, clean sand free of human and/or dog faeces.

165 The ATSC dwelling description as included in Appendix A.3 of their regional planning guidelines has been used to evaluate housing. The dwelling condition can be described as good, fair or uninhabitable. The writer's assessment did not include an internal inspection of housing. Some houses were entered at the direct invitation of the occupant.

166 The other had been abandoned by the occupants who had resumed living camp style.

167 Unless on the implicit invitation of the occupant, housing was not entered.

168 In some instances it is likely that the domestic skills of the resident would preclude the immediate clean up of dog faeces. Nine dogs were observed at one property, some in a poor physical state. This may present a health risk to occupants, particularly young children.

169 The relationship between community resources and housing amenities was not considered by occupants during the interviews. For example, the relationship between:

- type of toilet facilities and limited community water resources,
- consumption of electricity and carting of diesel to community, and
- supply of amenities and the distance of the community from suppliers.

170 For example, interviewed residents showed strong desires to have radiant heating from a power source for alternative warmth to fires.

171 One house is unoccupied due to a recent death. The occupant of the other house has been asked to leave the community for an extended period of time.

172 Low light levels were experienced in duplexes due to the placement of dividing walls on the verandahs.

Higher light levels may be required by some occupants due to their age.

173 Few houses had any vegetation growing in the yard areas

174 It was noted on visits that people using the interior of housing for sleeping purposes often prefer to leave lighting on all night. One occupant living inside liked the house because it was secure at night. The occupant was frightened of the wind and liked that the house did not make noises.

175 It was reported that the electric ovens were being used for heating. The Aboriginal Housing Authority have installed 2 hour cut-off switches to prevent the continuous use of the ovens for this purpose. Additionally the relationship between available resources and the supply of services (e.g. power/heating) was not brought up by any of the people interviewed.

176 It was interesting that none of the occupants of duplexes showed particular preference for free-standing housing.

177 See Section 4. Additionally it was noted that the staff at Oak Valley tended to be older than those observed at other Aboriginal communities in South Australia. Many have substantial experience working in

Aboriginal communities.

178 Generally the standard of Aboriginal housing has risen at the same time.

179 And quite deservedly too!

180 It is a condition of issuing a permit to visit Oak Valley that the visitor must spend a night in the community
(Barton pers. comm.).



SECTION 8

DISCUSSION

8.0 INTRODUCTION

The models of permanent and moveable housing¹⁸¹ in situ at Oak Valley are indicative of current housing provided through funding programs available to Aboriginal people in remote areas of South Australia. The development of the Nomadic models has been health based around the 'health hardware for healthy living practices' (Nganampa Health Council Inc. et al. 1987) and incorporates features such as:

- construction which resists damage¹⁸²,
- plumbing services that will tolerate some misuse, and
- the separation of wet and living areas to avoid possible contamination.

Other features recommended for the use of housing in a health based approach such as

- development of external areas,
- re-vegetation, and
- provision of health hardware¹⁸³

are beyond the scope of current housing funding programs. The implementation of the recommendations of the Report Uwankara Palyanyku Kanyintjaku (Nganampa Health Council Inc. et al. 1987) lies with a variety of sources (e.g. Health) and with occupants. It is not currently fully pursued as a responsibility of the Aboriginal Housing Authority or other service providers.

8.1 HOUSING PERFORMANCE

8.1.1 Introduction

As previously discussed, criteria have not been developed to evaluate the performance of housing in remote areas. The Report of U.P.K. used damage to housing¹⁸⁴ as one method of measurement. Other measurement and monitoring techniques commonly used in the field of building science are not generally useful due to the lack of associated research. For

example, thermal performance of housing cannot be conducted using measuring and monitoring techniques because thermal comfort zones for Aboriginal people living in remote areas have not been ascertained. Under these circumstances it is preferable to use a variety of techniques to gather information, including:

- interviews with people, and
- maintenance reports

to ascertain subjectively the performance of housing.

8.1.2 Performance of Housing against Environmental Conditions

Housing performance was evaluated in its ability in regard to the following items

- thermal performance,
- dust control,
- light levels,
- preclusion of dogs, and
- functioning of services.

The performance of housing against these factors is charted in Table 5.

Through interviews with occupants the writer was unable to gauge the control that moveable housing and community built shelters had on the occupant's living conditions. It can be seen (Table 5) that Nomadic Model H3-35¹⁸⁵ presented few opportunities to control environmental conditions. Nomadic models (with the exception of H3-35) which include air conditioning, heating and dust exclusion measures provide adequate opportunities to control the living conditions of occupants.

The ability of housing to control environmental factors is dependent on the occupant's ability to use the technology.

8.1.3 Housing Performance against Cultural Issues

In section 3 the literature survey showed a number of cultural issues that influence the

	Thermal Comfort (Hot Weather)			Thermal Comfort (Cold Weather)			Dust Control			Adequate Light Level			Preclusion of Dogs ¹⁸⁶		Functioning of Services ¹⁸⁷		
	U	S	UK	U	S	UK	U	S	UK	U	S	UK	No	Yes	U	S	UK
Moveable Housing			X			X			X			uk	X				uk
Community Built Shelters			X			X			X			uk	X				uk
Nomadic Model H3-35 Community Houses	X			X			X				X		X			X	
Nomadic Model H3-29 Community Houses		X			X ¹⁸⁸			X			X		X	X		X	
Nomadic Model HD-403 Community Duplexes		X			X			X		X			X	X		X	
Nomadic Model H3-29 Staff Houses		X			X			X ¹⁸⁹			X			X		X	
Nomadic Model H401 Staff Duplexes		X			X			X		X				X		X	

Legend

u = unsatisfactory

s = satisfactory

uk = unknown

TABLE 5 : Housing Performance to Environmental Factors, Oak Valley

relationship of occupants to housing were identified in the literature. A further number of more identifiable issues were established through the following methods:

- interviews with people, and
- observation.

Although this is a subjective method of measurement which has a number of limitations¹⁹⁰, it provides anecdotal evidence on the importance of cultural factors. Thus it can be noted that all permanent community housing was affected by cultural events. For example, abandonment of housing due to the following cultural reasons

- death of primary occupant,
- unsuitability of housing, and
- absence from community for cultural reasons.

The variation of responses for specific housing issues (such as abandonment of housing) suggest that service providers would need to communicate with communities in a consistent and appropriate manner to resolve housing issues to occupants' satisfaction.

All of the various models occupied by the community consistently showed the importance of cultural factors in determining different usages of housing by Aboriginal people in remote areas. All models for housing at Oak Valley are based on non-Aboriginal floor lay outs which are designed for non-Aboriginal use of space. Willis (1987) noted

The nature of the facilities provided must be closely examined to ensure that they are appropriate for meeting Anangu needs. Fairly obviously the first part of this task is to spend time identifying with Anangu what these needs are. The second part is to design, again with Anangu, houses that are actually geared for the way people want to live in (and out of) them. (Willis in Nganampa Health Council Inc. et al. 1987, p.86)

The development of housing to suit Aboriginal people needs is unlikely to occur without public participation and consultation.

	Minor Damage to Housing ¹⁹¹			Major Damage to Housing ¹⁹²			Abandonment of Housing ¹⁹³			Fluctuating levels of Occupancy ¹⁹⁴			High Occupancy Levels ¹⁹⁵		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Moveable Housing	-	-	-	-	-	-			X			X	-	-	-
Community Built Shelters	-	-	-	-	-	-			X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nomadic Model H3-35 Community Houses		X		X				X				X			X
Nomadic Model H3-29 Community Houses		X		X	X			X			X	X		X	X
Nomadic Model HD-403 Community Duplexes		X		X			X				X	X		X	X
Nomadic Model H3-29 Staff Houses	X			X			X				X		X	X	
Nomadic Model H401 Staff Duplexes	X			X			X				X		-	-	-

Legend

- 1 = no incidence
- 2 = some incidences
- 3 = continual incidence
- = no data available

TABLE 6 : Identification of Cultural Issues present in Housing Occupancy, Oak Valley

8.2 HOUSING PERCEPTIONS OF OCCUPANTS

8.2.1 Introduction

It can be seen in Section 7 that there are significant differences between the residents and their lifestyles at Oak Valley. The differences include:

- types of housing occupied
- a range of lifestyles ranging from camp style to non-Aboriginal lifestyles¹⁹⁶,
- the levels of permanent housing experience and/or knowledge, and
- the level of amenities (e.g. television, washing machines).

8.2.2 Satisfaction Levels of Occupants

High satisfaction levels were subjectively recorded by people pursuing lifestyles that were consistent with the housing styles occupied (i.e. primarily non-Aboriginal lifestyle and Nomadic Models H3-29 and HD4-03 and camp style lifestyle and moveable housing).

The lowest satisfaction levels were recorded by people occupying housing which was not designed for their lifestyles. These results were complicated by the model of housing occupied by some of this group (Nomadic Model H3-35). This housing was deficient in providing control over the external environment (e.g. temperature control, dust control, ventilation) or addressing cultural issues (e.g. security, siting) and did not add to the comfort and enjoyment of the occupants. Some people had chosen to abandon permanent housing and resume camp style life which was consistent with their housing experience and/or knowledge.

People pursuing a camp style lifestyle have difficulties occupying permanent housing without access to the appropriate experience and/or knowledge to use and adapt housing.

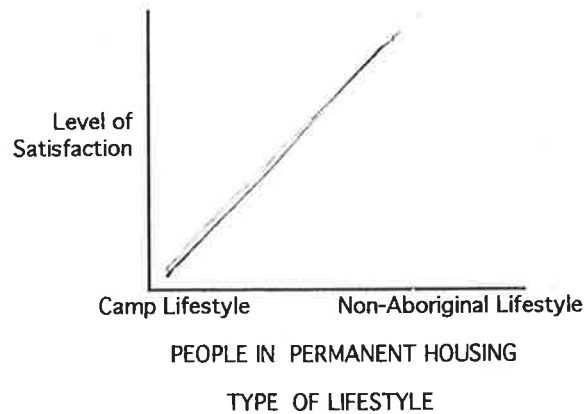


FIGURE 37 : Satisfaction Levels of Occupants of Housing at Oak Valley

8.2.3 Housing Experience and/or Knowledge

For many people at Oak Valley the construction of housing in 1996 was their first experience of the responsibilities of permanent housing¹⁹⁷. The primary method of acquiring housing knowledge appeared to be through relatives or direct experience at other locations. Housing knowledge is also gained through the observation of staff living at the localities. Gaining housing knowledge was particularly difficult for people without these opportunities. Other systems developed for passing on housing knowledge developed in other States for Aboriginal people¹⁹⁸ do not operate in South Australia at this stage¹⁹⁹. Non Aboriginal methods for the passing of housing knowledge²⁰⁰ are minimal in the community and individual community members have little input in the process of provision and management of housing and therefore do not gain experience through this process.

People have limited opportunities to adapt themselves or housing to specific problems due to an inability to access housing knowledge and/or experience and a conservative approach to change.

8.2.4 Amenities

Occupants with low satisfaction and minimal housing knowledge and/or experience had minimal amounts of household effects (Figure 38) such as:

- furniture,
- white goods, and
- television.

They noted that they had possessed some these items in the past and the items were currently unusable through damage or had been re-appropriated by other family members. They were aware that family behaviour made it difficult to maintain possessions in the past, but their inability to maintain possessions did not minimise their desire to enjoy their benefits. They perceived that these items were part of 'proper house' and should be provided with the house, as the occupants had limited ability to acquire them.

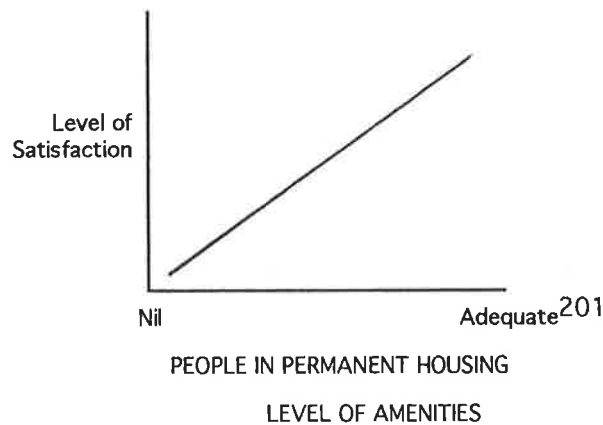


FIGURE 38 : Relationship Between Amenities And Satisfaction Levels Of Occupants, Oak Valley

One major difference between shelter and housing is the presence of household effects and the occupants' wish to enjoy housing with household effects. There are a number of difficulties in the provision of household effects, including:

- high financial outlay,
- distance from suppliers,
- possible high usage,
- low life span due to dust,
- high risk of damage, and
- high risk of re-appropriation.

Many Aboriginal households lack household effects to pursue lifestyle which is encapsulated in the current housing models. Beyond entertainment, certain household effects are required to pursue the increased health outcomes²⁰² desired by government policies.

Difficulties arise in provision. Household effects are beyond the financial capacities of concerned occupants of Oak Valley. At this time the provision of household effects is outside any government funding program. Provision under government funding would require massive sums statewide given lifespans and re-appropriation issues. Purchase from community assets (compensation funds in the case of Oak Valley) may not be in the long term interests of the community. It is difficult to view a scenario where the provision of household effects can be made in an on-going manner under current kinship behaviour patterns. It is noted that a house without household effects is merely a shelter, and the provision of housing under these circumstances is cosmetic and hides the reality of the situation to onlookers.

8.2.5 Defining a 'House'

Throughout the literature, different Aboriginal populations around Australia have different perceptions of what constitutes a 'proper house²⁰³'. For example, CAT when looking at the provision of homeland housing found:

People's perceptions of what constitutes a 'proper' outstation house is influenced in part by the metal prefabricated homesteads typical to outstation development throughout the Northern Territory and in particular at Nudjaburra.

(Centre for Appropriate Technology 1994, p.37)

From anecdotal evidence at Koonibba, it appears that this community was initially reluctant to move from iron housing models to current brick housing (Miller pers. comm.). From anecdotal evidence at Oak Valley, perceptions are considerably different and some community members wanted a 'proper brick house' with a flushing toilet, similar to housing models seen in urban areas of South Australia.

At the initial provision of housing to Oak Valley, it was decided to adopt²⁰⁴ prefabricated metal models with which the community had experience at Yalata. These models were already part of the tender system instituted by the AHA and reliable delivery was assured. The Aboriginal experience of being provided with products inferior to those enjoyed by non-Aboriginal populations may lead to a preference for housing models (e.g. brick) seen to be occupied by non-Aboriginal populations in urban areas. People living in Nomadic Model H3-35 did not regard then as a 'proper house'. Since housing at Oak Valley is to be occupied by people who may have specific views of what constitutes 'a proper house' some effort may have to be expended on behalf of the service provider to assess user needs and their perceptions of housing. If constraints²⁰⁵ limit housing types to certain models then public participation processes may be required to actively involve the community in the decision making process.

Little correlation was found between the 'Community Aspirations for Housing' prepared prior to the construction of housing at Oak Valley (Appendix 6) and opinions gleaned during interviews with occupants. The sustainability issues such as the use of pit toilets and the development of external areas mentioned in the first document were not brought to the fore. Community aspirations for housing appeared to focus on achieving conservative non-Aboriginal housing.

8.3 PROVISION OF HOUSING

8.3.1 Introduction

The process of provision was covered in Section 5, and issues relating to the provision process will be discussed here.

8.3.2 Consultation Processes

Under the current system in the provision and management of housing the concerned community applies to the service provider (Section 5) who allocate housing according to policy guidelines, funding limitations and a comparison of Statewide need. Consultation

between the service provider and the community is held characteristically with a variety of the following people:

- administrators²⁰⁶,
- works and maintenance staff,
- the community chairperson, and
- community council members.

Under self management policies this group²⁰⁷ tends to be responsible for a variety of consultative processes with service providers including:

- applying for housing
- deciding on housing models and location, and
- allocation.

In an ideal scenario the administrator works as an unbiased adviser to community chair people who in turn chair the council, again with no bias. In reality, this process is unlikely to occur and decisions may be beyond available areas of expertise or worse, decision making may be bound up with issues of kin obligation or competitiveness.

Moving from this model of decision making, the AHA is currently encouraging the formation of housing management committees in areas where they do not exist. Under this system, housing management committees assume responsibility for preliminary investigation of housing issues and placing items on the agendas of the respective community councils. Even under this model of consultation though, many issues may lie outside the housing management committees' expertise. Issues of competitiveness and family obligation may again enter into decision making, preventing opportunities for true community participation and/or consultation.

Under these conditions individual occupants have little power over housing decisions unless they are part of the respective decision making committees. Both systems place great pressure on community members who may provide the same decision-making function for other organisations²⁰⁸.

Public participation must be available to occupants and potential occupants for a number of reasons, including:

- 'ownership' of housing,
- transferral of information between occupants and service providers leading to individual housing outcomes,
- realistic expectations, and
- knowledge of responsibilities, policies and processes.

Public participation processes are difficult and time consuming. Ross (1987) notes:

Consultation, which is emphasised strongly by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, lies outside the experience of many of those charged with providing the housing, and proves difficult as people require time and information in order to consider the issues. There is often no Aboriginal organisation available to organise and assist in the consultation, and Aboriginal communication and decision-making channels can be laborious for non-Aboriginals to follow. (Ross 1987, p.2)

Given current consultation processes, service providers should consider the responsibility delivering specialised public participation processes to users, in consultation with the community councils²⁰⁹. A presentation of specialised information would allow community councils to make decisions and leave service providers to deal directly with their client in the first instance.

8.3.3 Choice

There is minimal choice for people requiring permanent housing in Oak Valley. At the present time two housing models (house or duplex) are available for Oak Valley and other remote areas of South Australia, and both options are supplied from the same source.

At the current time, only one company actively tenders for the supply of housing in remote areas of South Australia, thus nullifying the competitive element of the AHA tendering system. It is a frustrating situation for recipient parties and active measures must be taken by the AHA to correct the situation in the future. ²¹⁰ Active measures must be taken to encourage participation²¹¹ from all areas of the building industry in this specialist area to ensure the development of effective delivery process of a diverse

housing stock.

The large amounts of capital investment in infrastructure required, planning logistics and/or the location of the work all result in minimal numbers of construction companies and other tradespeople being involved in the delivery of housing. A shortage of tradespeople and construction companies working in the field may result in delays in some works. The use of specifications and close inspection of work by the AHA ensures consistent building materials and standards.

8.4 SUMMARY

The majority of houses supplied to Oak Valley are developed to control the external environment adequate to occupants needs. Cultural issues are more complex and require more consultation to enhance housing performance and acceptability. A number of cultural issues are not resolvable given the current behavioural practices of the occupants. This creates complex dilemmas. If the supply of housing requires changes in behaviour for the housing to meet occupants' desires, then who should instigate these changes? Will changes in behaviour result in the loss of elements of 'Aboriginal' lifestyle? How do the occupants make an informed decision about such issues? Schemes to provide housing knowledge are fraught with the same dilemmas.

Choices for housing are limited and provision processes appear to be outside the knowledge of many occupants. Occupants appear to have little input into the housing process and little opportunity to make housing design decisions specific to themselves. The possible inclusion of occupants into the housing process is complicated by the mobility of the population. Housing is reallocated locally at regular intervals. Current procedures for the provision of housing through service providers treat the community as the 'client' rather than the occupant.

-
- 181 With the exception of Nomadic Model H3-35.
- 182 Thereby increasing the lifespan and decreasing maintenance requirements to housing.
- 183 Personal health hardware included items such as firewood, warm clothes, blankets, bedding, soap, washers, towels, spare basin plugs, eskies, cooking utensils, water containers, and income among others (Nganampa Health Council Inc. et al. 1987).
- 184 The Report of U.P.K. states temperature control as one of the nine 'health hardware for healthy living practices'. It does not give optimum thermal comfort zones for occupants and covers only passive systems of controlling temperature within design ideas. From preliminary investigations of sun path diagrams it would appear using passive thermal controls such as orientation will not enhance thermal performance of housing substantially. Other passive systems (e.g. shade trees, and use of prevailing winds) will give greater temperature control. Air conditioning and other energy based systems may provide optimum results.
- 185 Recommendation 73 of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody noted that in the :
- ...the provision of housing and infrastructure of Aboriginal people in remote and discrete communities, including the design and location of houses, take account of their cultural perceptions of the use of living space... (Commonwealth of Australia 1997, p.4)
- Past work in the field of Aboriginal housing has identified that the 'culturally appropriate' approach to housing (Memmott in Depart. of Lands and Housing (NT) 1991) which uses housing to emulate elements of traditional shelters is unlikely to be accepted by Aboriginal occupants.
- 186 This notes whether housing was used as a method of precluding dogs from living environments.
- 187 This item notes the functioning of plumbing, electrical and sanitation services in housing. Information gathered from maintenance staff.
- 188 Occupants noted the desire for instantaneous heat, which may relate to their inability to access firewood due to incapability or availability of vehicles or tools.
- 189 Occupants noted that performance of housing could be improved in the area of dust control, but were generally satisfied.
- 190 See Section 2.
- 191 Minor damage to housing (typically door damage).
- 192 Major damage which renders house uninhabitable.
- 193 Non-occupancy of housing for extended period.
- 194 Level of occupancy changing on a recurrent basis.
- 195 Over six people sleeping at residence.
- 196 The following uses of housing were present:
- sleeping inside the house,
 - cooking inside the house, and
 - using external areas for recreation
- where the term non-Aboriginal lifestyles has been used.
- 197 Many of the group have spent most of their lives living camp style.
- 198 Such as the Homemaker schemes operating in the Northern Territory and Queensland.

-
- 199 At the Aboriginal Housing Authority Rural and Remote Program Policy Workshop held in August 1999 there appeared to be consensus on the need for Homemaker schemes but no decision were reached on which organisation would be responsible for such programs under current funding systems.
- 200 These methods range from magazines and television to being involved in the school working bee.
- 201 An adequate level of workable amenities was not calculated. From anecdotal information it appears to be the possession of a workable television and washing machine for elderly Oak Valley residents. This amenity level will change considerably with different occupants.
- 202 For example furniture is required for people to keep warm, dust free and comfortable. Washing machines are required to wash clothes and bedding. Refrigerators are required to keep food.
- 203 This term was used widely during interviews.
- 204 It would appear that initial consultation for housing took place between administrators and service providers rather than the potential occupants of housing.
- 205 For example, funding, location, construction processes and environmental constraints.
- 206 This position and other staff positions in communities are likely to be held from people outside the community (see Section 4).
- 207 Often it is difficult to gather this group together and representatives at meetings may have minimal community Aboriginal representation.
- 208 For example, ATSIC Regional Council, Land Management Committees, and the like.
- 209 One possible model for public participation could use the service provider as expert advice reporting back to the Community Council with recommendations which could then be decided upon. Under this model if the community required three additional houses the AHA would report on the allocation, location, style of additional housing after public participation processes, giving various options open to the Community Council under funding, policy and other constraints. The Community Council could then make a decision with all information open to them. This model would require specific expertise in public participation models to be developed within the Aboriginal Housing Authority. Some work in this direction has been done by the Centre for Appropriate Technology in the field of indigenous housing and community participation.
- 210 The AHA has trialed measures such as design competitions without major success (Butler pers. comm.).
- 211 The writer believes that active educational measures should be made to elicit interest from various areas of the building industry.



SECTION 9 CONCLUSION

9.0 INTRODUCTION

Conclusions are centred on the provision processes and existing housing at Oak Valley and have been developed with two sets of recommendations in mind:

- specific recommendations, and
- overview recommendations.

The specific recommendations relate to aspects of housing which appropriate bodies may wish to act upon to improve housing conditions at Oak Valley. Overview recommendations are broader and involve areas which may require further investigation.

9.1 THE PREMISE FOR HOUSING

The provision of public housing to Aboriginal people has been used as a political tool by various governments since its inception. The current premise for the provision of public housing for Aboriginal people in remote areas of South Australia is aimed at improving health outcomes in the case of NAHS (ATSIC administered) and is health based in the case of the Aboriginal Housing Authority. The National Housing Strategy states that the provision of public housing is to ensure:

....all Australians have access to quality housing which is appropriate to their needs.

(Commonwealth of Australia 1992, p.iiix).

There needs to be no justification for the provision of public housing to Aboriginal people.

Equally, housing has been used as an answer to a multitude of social issues in Aboriginal communities by various governments. Issues (e.g. education, health, substance use) can not be addressed through the provision of housing. The house is not a place in which activities and responsibilities related to social issues are addressed. These lie outside the of a physical structure of the housing.

9.1.1 Housing For Health

Based on the Report of U.P.K. and using housing as a basis of improving health a number of critical difficulties arise. The Report of U.P.K. identifies housing as only one of several mechanisms which, in collaboration, may improve health outcomes for occupants. Other critical mechanisms are:

- management of maintenance of public health,
- changes in behaviour,
- personal health hardware, and
- commitment and knowledge from occupant.

It is emphasised that only when these items are used in conjunction that marked improvement in health through housing can be achieved. It is particularly difficult to enjoy increased health outcomes without equal attention to all factors. Given that current documentation indicates that lifestyle diseases are the major causative factor in reduced health outcomes for Aboriginal people, it is unlikely that a housing-based health approach applied in isolation will have a major impact on morbidity rates.

The Report of U.P.K. also evaluated the impact on health that housing had through recording damage and the functioning of housing and its components. Post occupancy evaluation is seriously deficient in Aboriginal housing and the present study was extremely valuable in that respect. It gave some insight into the manner in which non-Aboriginal housing models performed and were used by Aboriginal people. The impact of the Report of U.P.K. can be seen in the development of low maintenance durable housing which is of benefit to occupants and service providers. As a post occupancy evaluation this truly was limited in that adaptations of use and perceptions of housing were beyond its scope.

Specific Recommendations

- Post occupancy evaluation should be included in the housing delivery process.

Overview Recommendations

- Further research on spatio-relationships and usage of housing by Aboriginal people in South Australia be conducted.

9.2 PROVISION

9.2.1 Service Providers

Through a process of negotiations and bilateral agreements throughout Australia, the Federal government has passed the service provision for Aboriginal housing to States whilst maintaining responsibility for funding. Ratification of programs has resulted in the passing of responsibilities for housing programs previously administered by ATSIC to the newly formed Aboriginal Housing Authority. This may result in the development of more specialised programs for housing in South Australia. However, it limits the opportunities for individual communities to engage outside consultants and limits alternative opportunities.

9.2.2 The Process Of Provision

The current process of provision for remote communities is centred around a tender system with quality controls through specifications. It aims at cost effectiveness to maximise capital new works from allocated funding and the provision of specialist support in the provision of housing to remote and rural communities. Through this process the amount of sub-standard building work and materials has been reduced. The adoption of a tender system may limit options for alternate or specialised designs as needs arise. In the case of Oak Valley the minimal input of the community during housing provision, has inhibited potential sources of occupant housing knowledge. Given that housing belongs to the community on completion and is generally allocated for infinite tenure, it is reasonable that the potential occupant have some choice of cosmetic finishes (e.g colour of external finishes) in the short term, and greater occupant input in the provision process in the long term.

Specific Recommendations

- AHA to develop an alternate tender system for specialised needs design.
- AHA to consider occupant input for cosmetic finishes in the short term.

Overview Recommendations

- AHA to consider mechanisms to increase each community's participation in provision of housing.

9.2.3 Housing Models

At the present time, three types of housing are provided to Oak Valley being wiltjas, Nomadic three bedroom houses and Nomadic two bedroom duplexes. Nomadic housing is the model used extensively for Aboriginal housing in remote areas of South Australia. The use of a model will not present 'a solution' for housing and the use of 'a model' is not recommended in any literature.

The use of the current model limits choice and is unlikely to suit all needs. If this approach is to be taken, then portfolios of alternate models through one or more supplier/s need to be available to communities. Alternatively, given the initial price of construction²¹², it may be feasible to look at architect designed housing. This could fall into the current tender system and could be internally supervised to maintain cost effectiveness and quality levels.

Remote Aboriginal housing is a specialised market in South Australia where there is currently one supplier and a limited number of building companies willing to complete works. The lack of competitiveness undermines the tender process and reduces choice for all parties.

Specific Recommendations

- that more choice be offered to remote communities by the AHA through the development of possible options such as:
 1. additional suppliers,
 2. a portfolio of housing offered to communities through one or more supplier/s, or
 3. the engagement of outside consultants in certain instances.

9.3 PREFERENCES FOR HOUSING

Aboriginal people have a long history of being supplied with inferior, sub-standard and/or what has come to be known as 'culturally appropriate' housing through public housing processes. It is not surprising that many people interviewed at the case study area showed preferences for 'a proper house', and indicated that preferred housing styles were similar to housing found in urban areas.

Specific Recommendations

- People in remote areas participate in the choices of housing types with AHA.
- Staff housing continues to reflect the current housing styles present in the concerned community and be constructed under the same processes and by same service providers as relevant community housing.

9.4 HOUSING AT OAK VALLEY

9.4.1 Moveable Housing At Oak Valley

Moveable housing is a valuable asset at Oak Valley due to the mobile nature of the community . It is used in two ways: by campers, and as additional accommodation for transient family members and visitors. The issues of re-appropriation of housing may be addressed by clearly identifying wiltjas as provided for aged care. Alternatively, some

moveable housing could become an asset of the community issued on the receipt of a deposit by the potential user (e.g. car keys).

There were a number of housing issues identified with occupying moveable housing on a permanent basis. It is important that people pursuing a camp style lifestyle are doing so by choice and are supported in their choice by family and/or staff and at times of need by alternate accommodation. The importance of the aged care centre, and nursing and support staff²¹³ must not be understated at Oak Valley although resident occupancy rates may fluctuate.

The supply of building materials for campers is essential and should be maintained centrally to reduce health and safety risks.

Specific Recommendations

- Moveable housing be allocated in three ways as follows:
 1. Permanent allocation to campers (wiltjas to be stencilled)
 2. Permanent allocation to housing as additional forms of family accommodation (wiltjas to be secured to frame and left in place in the yard).
 3. Issue to visitor by community (on receipt of deposit).
- Surplus building materials be relocated periodically to reduce health and safety risks.
- People pursuing a camp style lifestyle continue to be supported by family/friends in first instance as well as by nursing staff and staff of the aged care centre.

9.4.2 Community Built Shelters

Community built shelters provide opportunities for food storage for campers and are a valuable source of accommodation for transient populations. The use of moveable housing

in preference to these shelters is recommended given the possibility of detrimental health impacts.

Specific Recommendations

- Advise Maralinga Tjarutja of the difficulties of the shelters use.
- Suggest periodic sand replenishment under shelter if used on a sustained basis.

9.4.3 Community Housing (Nomadic Model H3-35)

The use of this housing model is insensitive, a misinterpretation of Aboriginal lifestyle, and presents health risks to users . It is of some concern that this housing was provided initially, given the volume of material on to inadequacy of 'culturally appropriate' housing.

Specific Recommendations

- Bring Nomadic Model H3-35 up to the housing standard of staff and other community housing in a limited time frame.
- AHA seek funding and advice in setting up a 'Homemakers' scheme as a method of passing on housing advice if desired by occupants.
- Support occupants in their adaptation from moveable to permanent housing through Homemakers (or similar program) as and if desired (AHA).
- Additional support be available within the community for these occupants as and if desired (Maralinga Tjarutja).

9.4.4 Community Housing (Nomadic Models H3-29 And HD-403)

Other Nomadic models were generally well accepted by occupants who do not pursue a camp style lifestyle. There appears to be no preference for free standing housing over duplexes although most occupants wanted larger houses. The size did not generally relate

to a greater amount of rooms but more floor space. For this or any housing to perform thermally in Oak Valley it must be air conditioned. It is difficult for some occupants to heat houses due to an inability through age to collect firewood or a lack of tools.

For people living primarily a camp style life style, permanent housing issues are more complex. It is particularly difficult to design housing which incorporates the Aboriginal use of space and housing as limited information exists on the subject. It may be more opportune to look at localised solutions for the combination of permanent housing with a camp style lifestyle and develop housing models specifically for this locality. The employment of post occupancy evaluation into the housing process may advance this.

Specific Recommendations

- Advise Maralinga Tjarutja of the possible need for community members to supply firewood²¹⁴.
- AHA to look at minor housing issues included in this report to improve housing performance. Specific issues include:
 1. Check ventilation levels in housing (particularly sleeping areas),
 2. Check orientation of future housing to take account of prevailing winds²¹⁵. Location of ablution/laundry block should be considered in this equation.
 3. Check internal light levels of duplexes.
 4. Weather strips for all doors to increase dust control.

Overview Recommendations

- More research on the use of space by Aboriginal people²¹⁶.
- The use of public participation processes/specialist advice to ascertain specific needs and solutions to housing issues.
- Post occupancy evaluation to be conducted.

9.4.5 Staff Housing

The use of similar models for staff housing is to be applauded. It further advances the development and delivery of environmentally appropriate housing.

Specific Recommendations

- Models of housing for staff and community remain similar and disparity between housing and housing services be discouraged.

9.5 OTHER HOUSING ISSUES

9.5.1 Amenities

It was difficult for some occupants to enjoy housing due to a lack of household effects. The ability to acquire possessions is hampered by the location and financial capacities of the occupants, and the security, maintenance and ability to enjoy household effects by occupants is often affected by other family members. It is recognised that household effects are a key issue in the enjoyment, health and functioning of houses.

There are two options to counter the security of amenities. In the first instance specialist advice on hardware could be obtained to increase household security²¹⁷. The second option is to effect changes in behaviour from within the community²¹⁸. If this option is chosen Maralinga Tjarutja may wish to support the community in pursuance of this alternative.

Specific Recommendations

- Investigate options of household hardware to increase household security, or
- Maralinga Tjarutja discuss issues of changing practices of reciprocity and kinship obligations with community and support occupants in their decisions.

9.5.2 Allocation and Occupation due to Cultural Requirements

There were cultural practices which are of particular significance to service providers (e.g. death customs, abandonment of housing). Responses in such instances may vary due to a number of factors and service providers need to speak directly to the community to ascertain their needs in these circumstances. Currently there is no separate funding available for demolition or relocation of housing stock for these purposes. Further issues arise regarding the altering of spatial relationships within the community after significant community events. Additional consultation will be required in such instances.

Specific Recommendations

- A method of communication between the community and the service provider of housing needs to be developed for this and other significant cultural needs relating to housing.
- Funding needs to be available for demolition and relocation in response to the cultural needs of the community.

Overview Recommendations

- Service providers need to be aware that spatial relationships within communities may change due to cultural needs and public participation processes need to be employed prior to the construction and locating of new housing.

9.6 CONCLUSION

Aboriginal people in remote areas of South Australia have a right to access public housing and have a right to have their choices for lifestyle and housing supported by government policy. Peoples' aspirations for housing may centre around non-Aboriginal housing types which is of some concern. It is unlikely that the current non-Aboriginal models used in remote housing will be compatible with current housing knowledge and lifestyles. This issue has been central to most research into Aboriginal housing since its inception as a

separate field. There have been two polar standpoints into attaining greater occupant satisfaction levels which range from:

- the changing of peoples use of housing, to
- the development of housing models to respond to Aboriginal needs.

Greater occupant participation must be sought through:

- public participation processes,
- post occupancy evaluation,
- individual occupant access to information, and
- individual consultation and problem solving,

This will give occupants of public housing in remote areas greater ability to make decisions in which direction they wish housing development to take. It is not enough to assume that Aboriginal control or representation of in service provision organisations will reflect the needs of occupants in remote areas.

The Aboriginal Housing Authority now has the main responsibility for programs and has developed mechanisms to counter initial dilemmas in the delivery of consistent stock. It is timely to involve occupant involvement in the process of provision and delivery of housing. Current funding levels are critically required for capital new works to Aboriginal people in dire need of equitable, safe and comfortable housing. Additional funding must be sourced to allow Aboriginal occupants to be involved in the process and for service providers to embark on this courageous exercise.

²¹² The current price of completed works is between \$160,000 - \$190,000 (depending on the source). It is feasible that architect designed options would fall between this range (Memmott pers. comm.).

²¹³ These staff provide a wide range of services in an area where services such as meals on wheels, domiciliary care, and respite care do not exist. One of the important functions of aged care staff observed by the writer was their ability to transport elderly people out to surrounding lands to socialise and celebrate their culture. Staffing levels must reflect these important functions.

²¹⁴ It was noted in the Report of U.P.K. that one of the main needs of elderly people in communities in the AP Lands was the collection and delivery of firewood. (Nganampa Health Council et. al. 1987)

215 From preliminary investigations of sun path diagrams it would appear using passive thermal controls such as orientation will not enhance thermal performance of housing substantially. It may be more preferable to orientate housing to take advantage of prevailing winds (Kendrick pers. comm.).

216 This information appears to be reiterated in every study on Aboriginal architecture, housing and spatial use.

217 In instances in other communities a central secure 'larder' has been designed within the house specifically for periods of occupant absence (Memmott pers. comm.).

218 This option may be difficult.



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APPENDIX 1
Glossary Of Terms

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AACAP	<u>ATSIC-Army Community Assistance Program</u> Program to provide infrastructure in remote communities. Funded by the Department of Defence, ATSIC and the Department of Health and Family Services.
ABS	<u>Australian Bureau of Statistics</u>
ADC	<u>Aboriginal Development Commission</u> now defunct. Amalgamated into ATSIC along with Department of Aboriginal Affairs (Federal).
AEDP	<u>Aboriginal Employment Development Policy</u>
AHA	<u>Aboriginal Housing Authority</u> Newly formed state body to provide housing and policy as a separate entity under the Human Services portfolio.
AHU	<u>Aboriginal Housing Unit</u> A previous unit of SAHT providing housing for Aboriginal people via the ARHP and H&CP. Newly formed into the Aboriginal Housing Authority.
AP Lands	<u>Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands</u> Area in north/north west of South Australia granted under land title to Anangu Pitjantjatjara people.
ANZAAS	<u>Australian New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science</u> now defunct
APG	<u>Australian Property Group</u> A business unit within the Commonwealth Department of Administrative Services

ARHP	<u>Aboriginal Rental Housing Program</u> Mechanism to provide funding for Aboriginal Housing as the tied component of the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA)
ATSIC	<u>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission</u> Elected Statutory body replacing DAA (Federal) and ADC with Aboriginal representation providing policy advice to government and administering programs.
CAT	<u>Centre for Appropriate Technology</u> Non- profit organisation providing low technology, service and advice to remote indigenous communities.
CDEP	<u>Community Development Employment Program</u> Employment and training program for Aboriginal people engaging in projects which seek to develop the community assets of Aboriginal communities.
Centrelink	Renamed Commonwealth Department of Social Security
CHIP	<u>Community Housing and Infrastructure Program</u> Funding mechanism providing housing and infrastructure to Aboriginal people on Aboriginal Lands funded by ATSIC through the Commonwealth
COAG	<u>Council of Australian Governments</u>
CSHA	<u>Commonwealth State Housing Agreement</u> Mechanism whereby housing funds are distributed to the states
CSPM	<u>Contracted State Project Managers</u> Contracted project managers who act on behalf of ATSIC in the implementation of the NAHS program in each state and manage projects individually. PPK and Environment are the South Australian CSPM.
CSIRO	<u>Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation</u>

CSWGIH	<u>Commonwealth State Working Group on Indigenous Housing</u> Working Groups to develop practical strategies to address impediments to improved housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
DEHAA	<u>Department of Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs (State)</u> State Aboriginal Affairs moved to this portfolio in 1997 without structural changes.
DOSAA	<u>Department of State Aboriginal Affairs</u> now known as DEHAA
H&CP	<u>Homelands and Community Housing Program</u> Provides housing to Aboriginal people on Aboriginal Lands funded from the ARHP.
HMC	<u>Housing Management Committee</u> Part of the consultative structure of Aboriginal Housing in SA which manages housing on a local level.
NAHS	<u>National Aboriginal Health Strategy</u> Strategy administered by ATSIC which has as it's components both HIPP and CHIP funding mechanisms.
NHS	<u>National Housing Strategy</u>
NIHS	<u>National Indigenous Housing Strategy</u> Agreement between the Commonwealth Minister for Housing and the Chairperson of ATSIC in mid 1994 providing eight point framework for the Channelling of ARHP funds with ATSIC Housing and Infrastructure funds
OVM Inc	<u>Oak Valley Inc</u> Management body for Oak Valley, South Australia
RAIA	<u>Royal Australian Institute of Architects</u>

RCIADIC	<u>Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody</u>
SAAHAC	<u>South Australian Aboriginal Housing Advisory Council</u> The Peak State Aboriginal housing advisory body charged with the task of creating an independent Aboriginal Housing Authority
SAHT	<u>South Australian Housing Trust</u> South Australian Housing Trust is responsible for public housing in South Australia. Until 1999 the Aboriginal Housing Unit was a branch of SAHT.

APPENDIX 2

**Ethical Clearance from Human Research Ehtics Committee
University of Adelaide**



H/20/99

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

Secretariat, Office of the Vice-Chancellor

Applicant: DR J CAREY
Department GEOGRAPHICAL/ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
Project Title HOUSING TYPES IN RURAL AND REMOTE ABORIGINAL SETTLEMENTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Project No H/20/99

APPROVED for the period until 30 April 2000

subject to

- (1) obtaining permission of each Aboriginal Community prior to visiting (when permission is in writing please provide a copy for the Committee's records)
 - (2) amendment to the subject Information Sheet, as discussed
 - (3) liaison with the Department of State Aboriginal Affairs
 - (4) consultation with the Aboriginal Health Research Ethics Committee of SA to ascertain if ethical clearance is also required by that Committee
- and on the basis that you will also use the Committee's contacts/complaints procedures document.

Professor CE Mortensen
Convenor

Date 26 MAR 1999

PROJECT NO: H/20/99

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Applications will be considered in terms of the University's guidelines on the ethics of human research, based on the NH&MRC Statement of Human Experimentation - refer application information material which also includes the list of headings applying to all applications. Submit the completed application including Information Sheet and Consent Form with 9 duplicate copies to the Secretary, Human Research Ethics Committee, Secretariat, Office of the Vice-Chancellor

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF PROJECT INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS - COVER SHEET - SUMMARISING PROTOCOL & INCLUDING INVESTIGATORS' SIGNATURES Please attach this to the front of the application

APPLICANT Name include title Professor/Dr/Ms/Mr and Position Dr Jan Carey, Lecturer A (Fractional)
DEPARTMENT including campus/institution contact address Department of Geographical and Environmental Studies, 250 North Tce, The University of Adelaide 5005
Phone No and email address
OTHERS INVOLVED Elizabeth Grant, B. Arch. Studies (Adelaide, 1986). Grad. Dip. Env. Studies (Adelaide, 1998) Master in Environmental Studies Candidate Department of Geographical and Environmental Studies, The University of Adelaide If this is a student project please indicate name/department/candidature
PROJECT TITLE Housing Types in Rural and Remote Aboriginal Settlements
LOCATION OF RESEARCH Rural and remote South Australia, to be selected (refer project description)
DATE PROJECT TO BEGIN 12 March 1999
ESTIMATED DURATION OF PROJECT Eight months - completion 10 November 1999
SOURCE OF FUNDING Student funded / fee paying Masters Degree. Student has applied for Australian Housing Institute Bursary.
AIMS OF PROJECT please give concise description in lay terms To document housing in rural and remote Aboriginal settlements from 1970 to present, and to assess the suitability of housing in terms of architectural, climatic and cultural criteria.

APPENDIX 3

Guidelines for Research in Aboriginal Remote Communities

APPENDIX 3

Guidelines for Research in Aboriginal Remote Communities

(adapted from Crawford 1989)

FIRST CONTACT

Introductory Letter

Do NOT visit a community without first writing to the Community Council:

- a) explaining clearly and concisely the reason for your involvement
- b) asking if a visit would be suitable, and
- c) nominating a time.

Write far enough ahead of the nominated time to allow community discussion of your letter. Leave it to the community to contact you if a visit or a particular time is not suitable. In this first letter, you may wish to have the whole community informed, supply a public notice for display.

Ask to be advised of any community rules to which you will be expected to adhere: for example, many communities do not allow alcohol.

If you receive no response to your letter, you may assume the visit has community approval. Closer to the time of your arranged visit send a reply-paid telegram (or telephone) checking that all is OK for your visit. The community will advise by reply if it is not.

Deaths, funerals, law meetings or pension days are no time to visit any community.

Responsibility for a Consistent and Appropriate Style of Work

DO realise that all the best laid preparations can come to nought. DO not take that as reason for dispensing with them.

FIRST VISIT

The Cup of Tea Trap

Do not disappear for a cup of tea with white project officers on arrival. This immediately sets up barriers to communication and puts both parties at a disadvantage.

Use Community Office

The cup of tea with the whites syndrome is lessening as more and more communities are without white residents or have their own community office and take initiative in greeting white visitors. It is understandable in those communities which have lived through policy eras that meant white residents were the 'bosses' and responsible for receiving white visitors. Often, communities were laid out in such a way that the road in would stop at the white superintendents' home and office.

Wait on the Outskirts if Unclear

There is a problem in many communities of there being no clear indication of where you should go on arrival. Obviously you should not wander at will about the village. If the settlement confuses you as to where to go, park your car on the fringes at the entrance side, get out and wait a while.

Usually someone will come to you and usually it will be someone who is expecting you. Do make sure you speak with the Chairperson or someone he had deputised on your business.

Never approach small groups of males or females sitting in circles talking. Wait for an approach to be made to you.

Position of Women

Do not assume the role of Aboriginal women play in their communities is just the same as that played by women in mainstream communities. Consciously make an effort to include women in any consultative process and find out with sensitivity, how this can be done

most appropriately in any particular instance.

Dress Standards

Dress standard play a major role

- Shabbily dressed could mean insult, if you are trying to be equal
- Business clothes could create ridicule and class distinction.
- be casual and neat

SLOWING DOWN

Obvious Commonsense is not always so

Do not expect to sew things up in one meeting. What may appear obvious commonsense to you may not be so from another viewpoint.

Passive Disagreement

As a general rule of Aboriginal communication, disagreement is passive when compared with the Western masculine styles of open discussion and forceful disagreement.

Dealing with Drunks and Aggressive People

The usual response is to ignore outbursts and carry on regardless. (note: people under the influence of alcohol will not be included in the interviews)

Use of Book Learning

Be tactful and discreet and quietly compare any book learning against actual situations.

Use book learning as an aid to understanding NOT as a template into which the actual will be fitted.

QUESTIONS

Negative Questions

The biggest problem with non Aboriginal people asking questions of Aboriginals is in the use of the negative question. This has no equivalent in Aboriginal languages and confuses people as to how they should appropriately answer

Example of negative question :

You don't want to go to town, do you?

Consciously strive to keep questions short.

Asking "Do you like your house?" also can have problems because if the answer is no, it is often hard to say no to a non Aboriginal person. Better then to ask several questions which do not rely on yes/no response.

Responses

Give the person time to absorb the question, and think about it. A yes could mean ' I hear you' not yes.

Time

People in some remote areas do not do things by the clock. Traditional methods of dividing up the year may be hot time, moontime.

For shorter time frames indicators of time may be

- When school starts/finishes
- When shop opens/shuts
- When the sun comes up/ goes down
- Two moons ago (eight weeks)

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Take enough food, petrol and other provisions for your own needs.

APPENDIX 4

**Critical Path
Research Methodology**

APPENDIX 5
Information Sheet



THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

Department of Geographical and Environmental Studies

INFORMATION SHEET RESEARCH : REMOTE ABORIGINAL HOUSING

My name is Liz Grant, I am currently researching housing issues in remote communities in South Australia as a Masters Degree at the University of Adelaide.

Specifically I am looking at:

- environmental considerations of housing,
(i.e. whether your house is hot, cold, dust proof etc.)
- cultural needs of housing.
(i.e. does your house have enough or too much space etc.)
- the process that housing is provided.
(i.e. can you get a house at the right time, etc)
- how do you/would you like housing?

I would like to visit your community to do the following things

- photograph the outside of the houses.
- talk to people living in houses about whether the houses suit their lifestyle.
- talk to the community about the good and bad things about the current houses.

All information will remain confidential. You will not be named in the report. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. The information will come back to the community and also to Aboriginal Housing Authority and ATSIC. The information may make them aware of changes they have to make to make housing better suited to your needs.

Please contact me if you have any queries

Liz Grant

Mawson Graduate Centre for Environmental Studies

University of Adelaide, North Terrace ADELAIDE

telephone (08) 8303 6200

Research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee, University of Adelaide, and has been presented to Aboriginal Health Ethics Committee through the Department of Environment, Heritage, and Aboriginal Affairs (DEHAA).

APPENDIX 6

Community Aspirations for Housing, January 1996

APPENDIX 6
COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS FOR HOUSING
OAK VALLEY JANUARY 1996

In correspondence from Oak Valley (Maralinga) to the Aboriginal Housing Unit (1996) the following points were made relating to the type and features of housing to be provided to the community:

Housing Type :

- housing to be permanent,
- desirous of 'nomadic' style housing (community has experience with this housing style at Yalata),
- use of housing which is an approved design by Aboriginal Housing Unit,

Placement and Number :

- placement of houses to ensure room for expansion of the family group, so that additional housing for family groups can be constructed around original dwelling into the future,
- placement of housing with considerable room between family groups,
- a significant number of houses to avoid over-crowding,
- placement of housing to maximise vegetation and to enable revegetation of areas previously denuded,

Climate Control :

- orientation of housing north/south,
- through ventilation (need for people to feel wind),
- verandahs on three sides of housing with non-verandahed side facing south,

Services :

- trenching for services which allows for easy access and repair and maintenance,
- placement of housing to ensure delivery of power and water in simple, easily co-ordinated and easily serviced manner,

External Areas :

- the planting of food plants near the house,
- the need for yard kitchens as well as stoves and fireplaces in the houses,
- the development of yard areas as living areas equally as important as the house itself,
- the delivery of firewood to avoid the use of local vegetation around housing,
- the need for pit toilets in the yard area as well as toilets in the house,

Water Supply :

- rainwater tanks connected to all roofing,
- a minimum number of taps (e.g. one for rainwater/drinking water),
- the provision of flush toilets to be dependent on water supply,

Delivery of Housing :

- provision of first housing not to be delayed by complex tender and design processes.

source: adapted from Oak Valley (Maralinga) Inc. 1996