

1942.  
—  
QUEENSLAND.

---

# REPORT

UPON THE

OPERATIONS OF THE SUB-DEPARTMENTS

OF

Native Affairs, Jubilee Hospital for Chronic Diseases (Dalby), Dunwich Benevolent Asylum, Institution for Inebriates (Dunwich), Eventide Home (Charters Towers), Queensland Industrial Institution for the Blind (South Brisbane), and Westwood Sanatorium.

---

---

PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BY COMMAND.

---

---

BRISBANE:  
BY AUTHORITY: A. H. TUCKER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

A. 10—1942.

# Reports upon the Operations of Certain Sub-Departments of the Department of Health and Home Affairs.

Department of Health and Home Affairs,  
Brisbane, 28th September, 1942.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit, for presentation to Parliament, the following information regarding the operations of the under-mentioned Sub-Departments of this Department.

R: H. ROBINSON,  
Acting Under Secretary.

NATIVE AFFAIRS (Deputy Director, C. O'Leary).  
JUBILEE HOSPITAL FOR CHRONIC DISEASES, DALBY (Superintendent, T. M. Daley).  
DUNWICH BENEVOLENT ASYLUM (Manager and Medical Superintendent, Dr. F. C. Turnbull).  
EVENTIDE HOME, CHARTERS TOWERS (Manager, E. P. Kelleher).  
INSTITUTION FOR INEBRIATES, DUNWICH (Superintendent, Dr. F. C. Turnbull).  
QUEENSLAND INDUSTRIAL INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND, SOUTH BRISBANE (Manager, J. E. Townsley).  
WESTWOOD SANATORIUM (Superintendent, Dr. J. H. Blackburn).

## Native Affairs Information contained in Report of Deputy Director of Native Affairs for the Eighteen Months ended 30th June, 1942.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit report under "The *Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Act of 1939*" and "The *Torres Strait Islanders Act of 1939*" as at the 30th June, 1942.

Previously annual reports covered a calendar year, therefore this one covers a period of eighteen months. The altered procedure is to provide more up-to-date information.

*Population.*—The total aboriginal and half-blood population as revealed by the census taken by the Bureau of Industry at the 30th June, 1941, shows that there were at that date aboriginals 8,977—half-castes 6,451—and Torres Strait islanders 3,675. These figures reveal a difference over the census taken at the 30th June, 1940, as follows:—

Aboriginals, 8 decrease; half-castes, 287 increase;

Torres Strait islanders, 167 increase.

*The Use of Aboriginal Labour under War Conditions.*—The shortage of man-power for the essential primary industries of Queensland in which aboriginal labour can be suitably employed has been met to the fullest extent consistent with availability of such labour, and to provide it, working gangs on Government Settlements and Church Missions have been reorganised and all surplus drafted to the industries.

To assist in the harvesting of the peanut crop in the Kingaroy district 100 men were sent from Cherbourg Settlement and a further 100 were sent from Woorabinda Settlement for harvesting cotton in the Callide Valley. Palm Island Aboriginal Settlement sent 112 to the sugar industry at Ingham, and a further 25 cane-cutters were supplied from Yarrabah Mission. This mission also provided 20 men for maize harvesting on the Atherton Tableland. As on Government settlements and missions all labour in country protectorates has been recruited and placed where the need was most urgent.

Arrangements are being made for the transfer of labour from Morningson Island Mission to the pastoral industry, and the missions at Mitchell River and Doomadgee in the Gulf district are likewise assisting to maintain the essential labour requirements. By reason of the foregoing the total number of aboriginals and half-castes, males and females employed has increased from 1,982 in 1940 to 2,497 in 1942. Reports received show that generally the conduct of aboriginals in employment is satisfactory. It can hardly be expected that these men, entering callings in which they have had no previous experience, could attain efficiency comparable with competent whites but it can be claimed that they are rendering a good service under conditions in many cases new to them.

*Farming and Stock.*—Despite reduced man-power on Government settlements and church missions a more extensive production of food crops has been undertaken. The difficulties which hitherto attended such production on Woorabinda Settlement have now been removed by the installation of three small irrigation plants which will enable a further 20 acres to be put under cultivation and already ploughing of such areas is well advanced. Lucerne, corn, and other stock fodders will be grown and provision is made for the production of vegetables required for the maintenance of the inmates.

At Cherbourg Settlement additional areas were put under vegetables and excellent crops of turnips, cauliflowers, and cabbages have already been harvested. After supplying the needs of the settlement it was possible to distribute seven tons of surplus to State institutions at Dunwich and Wooloowin, to the Salvation Army Women's Home, Toowong, and to Woorabinda Settlement.

At Palm Island Settlement additional areas for the production of vegetables are also being prepared, and on the three settlements aboriginals are being encouraged to cultivate food crops in their cottage gardens. The school children at Woorabinda and Palm Island Settlements are likewise growing excellent crops. A similar policy of greater production applies throughout all church missions, and generally every effort is being made to meet all essential requirements for a greater self maintenance of the institutions.

*Health.*—Generally the health of aboriginals has been satisfactory, and in country districts there has been no serious epidemic. Cherbourg and Woorabinda Settlements, and to a lesser degree Palm Island Settlement, experienced rather severe epidemics of dengue and mumps, but under medical attention and careful nursing very few fatal cases occurred.

Cherbourg Settlement was unfortunate in experiencing an outbreak of typhoid fever which was promptly put under control. Immunization and inoculation against diphtheria and typhoid fever has been completed at Cherbourg and is well under way at Woorabinda and Palm Island Settlements. At these settlements and church missions hospital efficiency has been well maintained despite the difficulties experienced in keeping the nursing staffs up to the required strength. In all cases coloured nurses are used to the fullest and the services rendered by them is commendable and invaluable.

*Relief to Indigent Aboriginals.*—The usual relief in food and clothing was issued to all indigent aboriginals throughout Queensland. Every precaution is taken by Police Protectors of Aboriginals to see that no aged or infirm aboriginal is allowed to want.

**Education.**—Allowing for war conditions the education of aboriginal children on Government settlements and church missions has continued, and satisfactory progress is reported. The total number of children attending such schools throughout the State is 2,239. The manual training classes at the Cherbourg Aboriginal School are catering for 12 boys from Woorabinda and Palm Island Settlements in addition to the Cherbourg boys and from this school capable and efficient apprentices are now being received into the settlements' artisan gangs.

**Aboriginals' Accounts.**—The total amount held in trust in the savings bank accounts of aboriginals is £252,324. No restriction on withdrawals within reason against these accounts is placed on the owners and, in the event of any aboriginal or half-caste receiving exemption from the provision of the Act, care is taken to see that his accumulated funds are protected or otherwise invested to his advantage.

**Child endowment.**—The payment of Commonwealth child endowment to aboriginal and half-caste mothers including Torres Strait women has proved an immeasurable benefit to mothers and children. This new income to mothers has allowed them to purchase extra foodstuffs, clothing and small luxuries and generally to maintain a higher standard of living than previously prevailed.

The collection and disbursement of such funds is controlled by the Sub-Department, and every care is taken to see that the best use is made of the endowment. The number of endowees participating is 969, and the total number of children benefiting is 2,845.

#### TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS AND SOMERSET DISTRICT.

**Administration.**—The responsibility given to Island Councillors under "*The Torres Strait Islanders Act of 1939*" has been well received and generally the administration of local affairs by these islanders is commendable.

**War Conditions Affecting Torres Strait Islanders.**—By reason of their location the Torres Strait islands experienced more drastically than other Queensland districts the effect of the war conditions. The administrative control over these

islands was much more restricted than in pre-war years, but nevertheless effective administration still continues, and the trading activities of Island Industries Board have not ceased. The employment of the men whose services are not otherwise required continues in the most important units of the islanders' fleet.

**Marine Industry.**—During 1941 approximately 500 men, principally Torres Strait islanders, were employed in this industry, but the number has been considerably reduced this year. Master boats employing approximately 100 men are now operating through a southern port and the base of operations of the Torres Strait fleet has been transferred to a southern location. Despite adverse conditions good catches are being recorded by the islanders fleet, and it is expected that remunerative returns will be obtained for the workers.

**Scouting.**—Scout troops on the Torres Strait islands under islander scout-masters continued to function. The training which the young men of Torres Strait received over a period of years through their Boy Scout and Rover organisations proved of considerable value when their services were later required by the authorities. At Palm Island Settlement the movement has been reorganised under the direction of officers of the Boy Scouts' Association and excellent reports of the progress are held. The value of scouting amongst aboriginal boys is recognised as one means of maintaining greater discipline and providing a measure of self-reliance and independence amongst them.

#### APPRECIATION.

Appreciation must be expressed of the self-sacrificing work of missionaries in their care of aboriginals and half-castes under their control. War conditions have added considerably to the responsibility of these people, but despite many hardships their excellent work is being maintained.

Appreciation and thanks are likewise expressed to the staffs of Head Office, Government Settlements, and to Police Protectors, all of whom have co-operated excellently in the work of protection to aboriginals.

Native Affairs - Information contained in Report of Director of Native Affairs for the Twelve months ended 30th June 1942

Corporate Author: Queensland, Home Secretary's Department

RS 25.4/3

[www1.aiatsis.gov.au/exhibitions/removeprotect/prot/lists/qld\\_prot\\_list.html](http://www1.aiatsis.gov.au/exhibitions/removeprotect/prot/lists/qld_prot_list.html)  
vn2005895\_6x\_a.pdf