

1945-46.

PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

ABORIGINES WELFARE BOARD

for Year ended 30th June, 1945.

Presented to Parliament in pursuance of the provisions of Section 19B of the
Aborigines Protection Act, 1909-1943.

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SUMMARY

of the

Annual Report of the Aborigines Welfare Board, New South Wales,

for the Year ended 30th June, 1945.

ABORIGINES WELFARE BOARD.

DURING the year ten meetings were held and the attendance of the members was very satisfactory.

Dr. Morris, Director-General of Public Health, was unavoidably unable to attend for four months, owing to serious illness.

Mr. S. L. Anderson, Under Secretary of the Chief Secretary's Department, continued in office as Chairman throughout the year.

Professor A. P. Elkin was again elected Vice-Chairman.

Mr. W. H. Dudley, Superintendent of Police, was transferred to the country after attending one meeting and his place was taken by Mr. Inspector R. H. Blackley.

Mr. A. W. G. Lipscomb, Executive Member of the Board, visited all Stations, Childrens Homes, and a large number of other settlements throughout the year, and maintained a close contact with the field work.

Mr. W. Ferguson, a person possessing an admixture of aboriginal blood, was appointed to the Board, as the Minister's nominee, in August, 1944.

In accordance with the provisions of the 1943 Amendment of the Aborigines Protection Act, elections were held amongst the aborigines in an endeavour to obtain two aboriginal representatives for nomination to the Minister. At the close of the year the selection of a full-blood representative had not been completed.

BOARD'S POLICY.

Continued difficulties in restrictions in connection with the implementation of a constructive policy was again apparent during the year. As a consequence, plans for large scale activity for the improvement of the aborigines had to be deferred, but it is hoped that with the termination of hostilities the auspices for a more successful year will be brighter.

The aim of the Board is to prepare the aboriginal people for citizenship and every endeavour is being made to educate the dark-skinned people so that they will be able eventually to adjust themselves to the white man's way of life. Most of these people are far removed from the primitive nomadic way of life that their forbears followed. Only about five per cent. of the aborigines of New South Wales are full-bloods, the balance being mixed castes. Consequently, it will be appreciated that their uplift and welfare is essentially a social problem.

In the pursuance of its policy, the Board is paying particular attention to Housing; Health and Hygiene; Care of Mothers and Children; Protection of Women and Girls; Employment and Education.

VITAL STATISTICS.

It has not been possible since 1941 to take an official census of aborigines, but the present population figures may be regarded as approximately equal to the official figures compiled during that year. The present estimated population figures are:—

Full-bloods, 594; and mixed-bloods, 10,022.

At the 30th June, 1945, a total of 2,206 aborigines of various castes resided on Stations and 1,761 on Reserves. These figures present a slight decrease on the Stations and a slight increase on the Reserves.

STAFF ORGANISATION.

The war, which has continued throughout the whole year, has affected adversely the availability of man-power for employment in the service of the Aborigines Welfare Board, and has militated against the efficient management and development of Aboriginal Stations and other institutions. Difficulties in securing staff has been apparent, particularly in the Children's Homes, where officers have been required to meet the necessity by working long hours and at high pressure. Head Office has suffered by having three of its male officers absent on active service, their duties being taken by female officers.

At the close of the year the position had slightly improved, so far as the separation of teacher and manager functions is concerned, in connection with officers-in-charge of Aboriginal Stations. Five Stations are now employing full-time Managers. Continued representations are still being made to extend this arrangement to other Managers.

ASSISTANCE TO ABORIGINES TO ACQUIRE THEIR OWN HOMES.

The Board is now able to assist selected families to acquire their own homes under an arrangement somewhat similar to Building Societies. The Government voted £3,000 for this purpose, but owing to difficulty in securing building materials, and also restrictions on the purchase of land, it was not possible to proceed very far with the scheme this year. During the year forty-one applications were received for assistance to build homes. Only seven cases were approved for the present and of this number the Department of War Organisation of Industry has been asked to approve of permits immediately for two applicants.

EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES FOR ABORIGINES.

The issue of Exemption Certificates to approved aborigines was made possible by the Amendment to the Act in 1943. The Commonwealth Government has recognised the usefulness of the Exemption Certificate, in so far that it is prepared to regard the holder as being equal in living standards and general intelligence to members of the general community. Ordinarily, the Commonwealth Government is not prepared to provide Pensions and Maternity Allowances to aborigines possessing a preponderance of aboriginal blood, and also to aborigines who reside on an Aborigines Reserve. Any aborigine, however, who possesses an Exemption Certificate becomes eligible to receive the social benefits granted by the Commonwealth Government.

During the twelve months under review, forty-seven cases of Exemption Certificates were dealt with, of which thirty-four were granted, eight declined and five deferred.

BOARDING-OUT OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN.

During the year, thirty-eight children were committed by the Courts and admitted as wards to the control of the Aborigines Welfare Board. The placing of these children is as set out hereunder:—

Boarded-out privately with families on Stations	8
Boarded-out in private homes off Reserves	2
Admitted to Bomaderry Children's Home	10
Placed in approved denominational institutional Homes	7
Placed in Children's Homes under the control of the Aborigines Welfare Board	11

LABOUR CONDITIONS AND EMPLOYMENT.

The employment position has continued to be satisfactory during the year. The war period has been a splendid opportunity for aborigines to establish themselves in employment and to prove their worth. Many have succeeded well, whilst a number have failed.

Employment figures for the year are slightly less satisfactory than the two previous years. The average percentage of able-bodied men in employment during the last quarter of the years 1943, 1944 and 1945, was as follows:—

1943 ..	95%	1944 ..	96.2%	1945 ..	93.3%
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JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT.

When youths and girls on aboriginal settlements leave school the officer in charge endeavours to find suitable employment for them, and their progress is kept under notice. Many of these young people are at present commanding relatively high wages, but whether this wage standard will continue after the war is a matter for conjecture.



Children who are being committed to the care of the Board as wards are maintained at the Board's Institutions until they reach school leaving age, after which they are given a short course of training for their future work. At the 30th June, 1945, eleven boys and nineteen girls, all wards of the Board, were in employment under apprenticeship conditions. These young people were visited regularly by the Welfare Inspector and their personal interests carefully safeguarded.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE.

On the whole, the general health of the aborigines has been satisfactory. It is inevitable, however, that the usual ailments common to communities have occurred from time to time, but nothing of a serious nature has been brought under notice.

On Stations, where possible, a community vegetable garden and dairy herd have been maintained for the use of the residents. On all Stations an arrangement exists whereby all children up to school-leaving age are provided every morning at 11 a.m. with a mug of milk or cocoa, together with a liberal slice of bread and butter, and a spoonful of malt extract. This has had a most beneficial effect in building up the stamina and resistance of the children.

At those centres near to aboriginal settlements, where the Department of Public Health has stationed Baby Health Centre Nurses, these officers have visited aboriginal expectant and nursing mothers and rendered advice to them. Pilliga and Woodenbong Aboriginal Stations are situated remotely from local doctors and the services of the local bush nurse have been availed of when necessary. Dental treatment for aborigines on all Stations and most Reserves has been provided, either by use of the Travelling Dental Clinic or by the employment of local dentists.

HOUSING.

In connection with the Commonwealth scheme concerning Post-war Reconstruction, the Aborigines Welfare Board has submitted a comprehensive building scheme, involving the establishment of a number of new Stations, Children's Homes and other necessary institutions. The proposals have all been approved and endorsed as warranting the highest priority. The erection of over two hundred homes has been included in the various proposals. During the year war conditions have caused an almost complete cessation of private building and the Board was able only to complete a very limited amount of building. The total amount spent on building works throughout the year was only £3,440.

AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY.

Throughout the war period, Aboriginal Stations have not been developed agriculturally to the fullest extent, owing to lack of labour, both aboriginal and white; also lack of fertilisers, machinery, etc. On a large number of the Stations, however, satisfactory community gardens have been maintained and the residents have been able to obtain vegetables for their home consumption free of cost. Dairy herds are also kept and sufficient milk has been produced for the needs of the families.

The South Coast and Riverina Aboriginal Stations suffered badly as a result of the prolonged drought.

EDUCATION.

The Education Department has now approved of an arrangement whereby the children of any aborigine securing an Exemption Certificate may be admitted to the ordinary Public School, notwithstanding the existence of any special school for aborigines in the district, or any decision by the Education Department for the general exclusion of aborigines from the Public School concerned.

Two boys from the Kinchela Boys' Home have shown a high degree of intelligence and arrangements are being made for them to attend Kempsey High School next year. At the Cootamundra Girls' Home, one girl is already attending the Cootamundra Central Public School and negotiations are at present in progress for the enrolment of additional girls at an early date.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES ON STATIONS AND RESERVES.

The Aborigines Welfare Board considers that its function is not so much to attend to the spiritual need of the people as to their material requirements. However, every encouragement is given to the various missionary bodies and to the local clergy to minister to the people at every opportunity.

The Board has laid down the general principle that there should be no restrictions on the claims of any particular accredited religious or missionary organisations to conduct services or religious instruction in the aboriginal communities. The Board has also indicated its preparedness to provide on its Stations either one or two buildings for religious worship; one should be a church and the other a hall that could be adapted for religious services if necessary.

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REFRIGERATORS FOR INLAND STATIONS.

In order to provide cool and nourishing foods for ailing people, particularly infants and children, on Aboriginal Stations in the hot western districts, arrangements are now being made for the supply of refrigerators to most Stations. Four Stations were supplied with refrigerators during the year, and orders are now being placed for supply to seven more Stations during the coming year.

RELIEF AND BENEFITS TO ABORIGINES FROM THE BOARD.

The Board has continued to exercise care and dispense relief to all aged, infirm, indigent and incapable aborigines.

The benefits derived by aborigines in need of assistance include the following:—

Housing;	Medical attention;
Rations;	Baby outfits;
Clothing;	Christmas cheer.
Blankets;	

The number of rations issued to aborigines on Stations throughout the year remain approximately the same as for the previous year, the number of recipients this year being 452 persons as at 30th June, 1945. Ration recipients on Reserves showed an increase of 148 to 201 persons at the close of the year.

Clothing outfits issued to aborigines number 1,048 this year, as compared with 938 last year.

Blankets have been more plentiful this year, and 599 were issued compared with 452 the previous year.

SOCIAL BENEFITS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.

The Aborigines Welfare Board has continued the supervision of expenditure of Endowment moneys payable to aborigines on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. At the close of the year 268 cases were administered by the Board, this being the smallest number on record. The total amount involved in connection with these cases was £10,542. During the year thirty-two cases were converted to direct payment and nine cases reverted to the Board's control, owing to unsatisfactory handling by the parents of Endowment payments received by them.

Old Age Pensions, Widows' Pensions and Invalid Pensions are paid by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services to those aborigines who are able to comply with the requirements of the Commonwealth Act. Aborigines who possess a preponderance of aboriginal blood, however, are not eligible to receive any of the pension payments referred to. Furthermore, aborigines of any caste may not receive pensions whilst they are resident upon Stations and Reserves. If, however, an aborigine obtains a Certificate of Exemption and accordingly undertakes to live independently of the Board, the Commonwealth Department will grant them a pension.

CHILDREN'S HOMES.

The Aborigines Welfare Board assumes control of aboriginal children if they have been committed by the Children's Court as neglected or uncontrollable children. At present there are two Homes established and maintained by the Board, namely, Kinchela Boys' Training Home and Cootamundra Girls' Training Home. The present arrangement is not ideal, for it is considered that young children up to nine years of age should be maintained separately from children over that age. It is the Board's intention, as soon as conditions permit, to establish separate Homes where children can be classified and accommodated according to age groups.

Kinchela Boys' Training Home. An average of forty-eight boys was maintained throughout the year. There were eleven admissions and five discharges and one death. The general health has been excellent and regular dental and medical inspections have been made.

New bathroom blocks with hot water services and night conveniences were provided during the year and are now functioning satisfactorily. Arrangements are now being made for the provision of a small industrial laundry unit. Attention to the education of the children is in the hands of the Education Department, which has provided a school and two lady teachers at the Home, particular attention being paid to hobbies and handicrafts.

Religious instruction and services are provided regularly.

The Home has been mainly self-supporting as regards milk, cream, butter and vegetables throughout the year.

Cootamundra Girls' Training Home. The average number of children maintained at the Home was forty-eight. Nine girls were transferred to employment, five were admitted.

The health generally was very satisfactory and regular visits have been made by the local Government Medical Officer and practising dentists. A number of children had their tonsils removed. Eye conditions caused a little trouble, but have responded well under treatment. Local residents, including

the teachers of the local Public School, have interested themselves in the aboriginal children at the Home, and pay weekly visits to conduct singing lessons.

Continued staff shortages at the Home were experienced throughout the year. Mrs. E. C. Hiscocks was appointed as Principal of the Home during the year, her duties embracing the full charge of the School, as well as the control of the Home.

ABORIGINAL STATIONS.

Nineteen Stations situated throughout various parts of the State were maintained under the control of the Board during the year. These Stations represent communities of aboriginal families under the control of a resident Manager and Matron. The Stations are provided with the amenities of a small village.

The Stations vary in area from thirty-one acres to 4,060 acres. Distribution of population at the Stations as at 30th June, 1945, is grouped as follows:—

Over 200 residents	3	Stations
Between 100 and 200 residents	13	„
Under 100 residents	3	„

The area acquired at Murrin Bridge, Lake Cargelligo, for the establishment of a new up-to-date aboriginal Station has been surveyed in readiness for building operations, but owing to labour conditions, it was not possible during the year to proceed with the actual erection of buildings.

The vital statistics for all Stations for the year were as follows (previous year's figures being given in parenthesis):—

Births	116	....	(124)
Deaths	42	....	( 31)
Marriages	22	....	( 14)

ABORIGINES RESERVES.

Aborigines Reserves are areas set aside for the use of aborigines, but not under the control of resident Managers. Over fifty Reserves are set aside for the use of aborigines in various parts of the State, but of this number only thirty-three are inhabited by aborigines. The total population on Reserves at the end of the year was 1,761—an increase of 136 on the previous year.

During the year, two new areas were acquired for Reserves, these being situated at Gulargambone and Moree.

ACCOUNTS AND GENERAL EXPENDITURE.

The Estimates for the year 1944-45 provided an amount of £56,893 for use by the Aborigines Welfare Board for the relief and benefit of aborigines and for their welfare generally. The actual amount expended was £46,181. The under expenditure was partly due to the fact that war conditions, with attendant scarcity of labour and materials, prevented the utilisation of the full appropriation of £10,500 for the erection of buildings, also repairs and renovations.

In addition to the expenditure by the Aborigines Welfare Board, an amount of £6,865 represents expenditure incurred by other Departments on behalf of the Board.

An amount of £498 was provided from General Loan Account to meet the balance of the special building work done at the Kinchela Boys' Training Home, in connection with the erection of special bathrooms and night lavatories.

28th February, 1946.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Aborigines Welfare Board, New South Wales,

for the Year ended 30th June, 1945.

The Aborigines Welfare Board have the honour to present to the Honourable the Chief Secretary the following report on its work during the year ended 30th June, 1945, together with information on the care and general welfare of the aborigines resident within the State of New South Wales during that period.

The report also refers to other information concerning aborigines in this State.

ABORIGINES WELFARE BOARD.

During the year ten meetings of the Board were held, the attendance of the members being as follows:—

Mr. S. L. Anderson	10
Professor A. P. Elkin	10
Mr. A. W. G. Lipscomb	10
Mr. M. Sawtell	10
Mr. G. E. Ardill	9
Mr. H. Bartlett	9
Mr. J. P. Glasheen	9
Mr. W. Ferguson	8
Dr. E. Sydney Morris	6
Mr. R. H. Blackley	5
Mr. W. H. Dudley	1

The attendance at meetings was very satisfactory, absences in practically every instance being caused by pressure of other official duties. It is regretted that Dr. Morris was unable to attend meetings for four months, owing to serious illness.

Mr. S. L. Anderson, by virtue of his position as Under Secretary of the Chief Secretary's Department, and in accordance with the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act, continued to occupy the position of chairman of the Board throughout the year, and was in attendance at all meetings.

Professor A. P. Elkin was again elected as vice chairman, and continued in that office throughout the year.

Mr. W. H. Dudley, in his capacity as Superintendent in the Police Department, joined the Board as the representative of his department just prior to the close of the previous year. He continued as a board member for one meeting during this year and was then transferred by his department to the charge of a country district. His place on the Aborigines Welfare Board was taken by Mr. Inspector R. H. Blackley.

Mr. A. W. G. Lipscomb, Superintendent of Aborigines Welfare, is *ex officio* a member of the Board. During the year he fulfilled the requirements of the Act by making inspection visits to all the aboriginal stations and children's homes, also to a number of aborigines' reserves throughout the State.

On the 22nd August, 1944, Mr. W. Ferguson, a person possessing an admixture of aboriginal blood, was appointed by the Executive Council to the Board as a nominee of the Minister. Mr. Ferguson has regularly attended all meetings since October, 1944.

An election of two persons to represent the aboriginal people, one as a full-blood and the other as a person possessing an admixture of aboriginal blood, was held towards the end of 1943. Whilst a representative coming within the latter category was elected for nomination without difficulty the task was not so easy in respect of the full-blood. The calling of nominations on three separate occasions was necessary before a full-blood representative was secured, and on the 17th October, 1944, the Minister was notified that Mr. Alexander Solomon had been elected for nomination as a full-blood. The nomination of Mr. W. Ferguson as a representative of the aborigines, and possessing an apparent admixture of aboriginal blood had previously been submitted. At the close of the year these two aboriginal nominations had not been finally considered by the Executive Council.

BOARD'S POLICY.

The past five years have been fraught with many difficulties and restrictions in connection with the implementation of a constructive and comprehensive policy. These war years have necessitated a curtailment of expenditure and an inability to proceed with the general building programme, owing to shortage of manpower and the non-availability of materials. Furthermore, plans for the development of welfare activity which would be consequent upon more adequate staffing, have had to be deferred because of the inability to secure trained staff.

The auspices now are brighter, and with the termination of hostilities in Europe, it is hoped that victory will soon be proclaimed throughout all the spheres of war. With the advent of peace and a return to normal conditions the Board intends to pursue its plans in an endeavour to prepare all people of aboriginal descent to attain, as soon as possible, full citizenship, with all its rights, privileges and responsibilities.

In the last annual report, stress was laid on the great need to prepare the aboriginal people for citizenship. It was shown that there are fundamental differences between aboriginal culture and white civilisation that involve difficult sociological and psychological situations. These difficulties must be met and every endeavour made to educate the dark-skinned people so that they will eventually be able to adjust themselves to the white man's way of life.

It must be understood that the so-called "aborigines" of New South Wales are for the most part not truly aboriginal in the accepted sense of the word. Most of these people are far removed from the primitive nomadic way of life that their forbears followed. Whilst, perhaps, they have not, as a whole, reached the standards of living adopted by the white community, they have, nevertheless, moved away in varying degrees from the tribal habits and customs of the uncivilised aborigines. Only about 5 per cent. of the aboriginal community of New South Wales are full-bloods, the balance being mixed castes, and when it is realised that all of these people have had almost continuous contact with the white population and have adapted themselves to some extent to the white way of living, it will be appreciated that their uplift and welfare is essentially a social problem.

In an endeavour to achieve the eventual goal of assimilation, which involves complete citizenship, privileges and responsibilities, the Board realises that wise and patient administration must be exercised. The principal factors that will be given careful attention are set out hereunder:—

Housing.—If the native people are to be expected to improve their living standards, so that they shall be acceptable to the white community and not ostracised when they make their homes side by side with their white brethren, they must be given satisfactory homes in which to reside whilst they are still under the Board's care on stations and reserves. It is the Board's intention when providing new homes to erect comfortable four-roomed or five-roomed cottages, complete with laundry and bathroom and with water laid on from a reticulated supply wherever possible. The occupants will be urged to develop a pride in their homes, to maintain them in a clean condition and to improve their surroundings by establishing gardens. Thus, in the course of time, when they leave the Board's stations and reserves to live privately, their home standards should compare favourably with their white neighbours.

Health and Hygiene.—The aboriginal community will be constantly guided in the principles of health and hygiene. They will be shown that good health and an understanding of proper diet are essential to cultural advance; an appreciation of the importance of sanitation has to be developed; education concerning the nature, cause and cure of illness must be steadily pursued. It will be necessary to ensure constant inspection, oversight and direction of stations and reserves, as well as official camps on the outskirts of towns.

Care of Mothers and Children.—When it is realised that the vigour of the present and future generations depends mainly on the health of mothers and their care of their children, everything possible should be done for the welfare of expectant and nursing mothers. The children, too, must be properly cared for and approved rules of diet and hygiene followed.

Status and Dignity of Women.—It has been evident in the past that coloured girls and young women are regarded by some men as fair game in the pursuit of their immoral excesses. These aboriginal women may not have had the advantage of a good home background and as a result they sometimes fall a very easy prey to vicious men than would otherwise be the case. The raising of the status of aboriginal women and those of aboriginal descent may be a long and arduous task, but, with the help of the general community it can certainly be accomplished. Women with aboriginal blood in their veins should be treated with the same dignity and

respect as their white sisters; they should be led to an appreciation of the dignity of labour, and whilst domestic service may be accepted by them as an opportunity of learning to become good housewives, those who so desire should be helped to become proficient in other avenues of work in the industrial world or in professions, such as teaching and nursing.

Employment.—The interests and welfare of aboriginal workers should be safeguarded. Their work standard should be on the same basis as the white people, and this fact should be appreciated by the employers as well as the employees. Aboriginal workers must be educated to a proper appreciation of the dignity and responsibility of labour and of their duty to employers.

Education.—If aborigines are to share in our way of life they must be helped to see our problems and to understand the assumptions and reasons on which we base our activities. Whilst the education of aborigines of to-day may not extend much beyond the primary school standard, the policy for the future, so far as education is concerned, should involve education beyond the primary school standards and should include technical, industrial and agricultural education.

VITAL STATISTICS.

As pointed out in the previous annual report, no official census of aborigines has been taken in this State since 1941. Detailed vital statistics for that year have already been supplied in previous annual reports, and the figures for that year are again set out hereunder:—

Caste.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
Full-blood	478	116	594
Mixed blood.....	5,410	4,612	10,022
			10,616

At the 30th June, 1945, a total of 2,606 resided on the nineteen stations under the control of the Board. This population represented a decrease of forty-eight persons on the previous year. The Reserves, excluding Stations, show a total of 1,761. This represents an increase of 127 persons on the previous year. Detailed population figures for individual Stations and Reserves are set out in Appendix "A" and Appendix "B" respectively, at the end of this report.

STAFF ORGANISATION.

The War, which has continued throughout the whole year under review, has played its part in affecting adversely the availability of man-power for services other than those connected with the prosecution of the War. As a result, the difficulties associated with the obtaining of adequate and proper staffing for the Board's stations and other institutions have by no means become diminished. Staff shortages have been most acute in the children's Homes, where domestic staff is so important. The children must be properly fed and cared for, and, frequently, the depleted staffs have been required to meet the necessity by working long hours and at high pressure. The Board's grateful thanks are extended to those members of staff who have so loyally met these difficulties, and the hope is expressed that a happier state of affairs will be evident in the coming year.

Head Office staff have again shouldered their duties cheerfully, despite difficulties in the Department. Three male officers are still on active service and their duties have been allotted to female officers. These young women have performed their additional duties in an efficient manner and are to be commended for their loyal service.

The Board has continued to press for the appointment of fully-trained teachers as separate officers in the schools on Aboriginal Stations. In past years managers have been required to undertake the dual duties of management and teaching, with the result that the efficiency in both sections has been impaired. There has been a growing realisation of the need for a division of these duties if stations are to be managed efficiently and the children are to receive proper education. At the close of the year under review, teachers, as distinct from managers, were employed on five aboriginal stations, namely—Boggabilla, Burra Bee Dee, Cumeroogunga, Menindee and Quirindi. Continued representations are still being made to have the functions separated on other stations and it is hoped that eventually all managers will be able to devote themselves fully to the management of their stations and be relieved of the responsibilities of teacher in charge of the school.

ASSISTANCE TO ABORIGINES TO ACQUIRE THEIR OWN HOMES.

It was pointed out in the previous report that the Board is now empowered to acquire land, erect buildings thereon, and to sell or lease such land and buildings on terms to the aborigines, to enable them to establish homes for themselves as members of the general community. It is the Board's intention to assist selected families to acquire their homes under

an arrangement somewhat similar to that of building societies. The Government voted £3,000 for this purpose on the year's Estimates, but, owing to difficulty in securing building material and restrictions on purchase of land, it was not possible to proceed very far with the scheme during the year under review.

Aborigines desiring assistance in the purchase of land for building homes thereon should be of a superior type and sufficiently reliable to ensure a likelihood that they will keep up their payments once they have entered into their commitment. Applicants are asked to save sufficient money for a deposit, equal to about 1/10th the amount of the advance.

During the year forty-one applications were received from aborigines desiring assistance to acquire their own homes. In view of the limited amount of funds made available to the Board, the number of applications approved to date is seven. After having made a selection from the applicants, the Board approached the Department of War Organisation of Industry for permits to build homes, and at the close of the year under review two permits have been granted.

It is the Board's intention to purchase a number of building allotments in suitable country towns at an early date, in readiness for the erection of homes at the appropriate time.

EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES FOR ABORIGINES.

The 1943 Amendment of the Aborigines Protection Act provided that an exemption certificate may be issued to any aborigine or person apparently having an admixture of aboriginal blood, who, in the opinion of the Board, is a fit and proper person to receive such exemption from the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act. This, in fact, would give an aborigine full status as a citizen of the State, and would free him from all those restrictions that may be imposed upon aborigines in accordance with the Act. The Commonwealth Government has recognised the usefulness of an exemption certificate, in so far that that Government is prepared to regard the holder as being equal in living standards and general intelligence to members of the general community. Ordinarily, the Commonwealth Government is not prepared to provide the usual social benefits, such as old age, invalid, and widows' pensions, also maternity allowance, to aborigines possessing a preponderance of aboriginal blood; furthermore, any aborigine who resides on an aborigines' reserve is not eligible to receive the old age, invalid or widows' pension. If, however, any aborigines coming within the aforementioned categories are granted an exemption certificate by the Aborigines Welfare Board, and automatically remove themselves from the care of the Aborigines Welfare Board, such aborigines may become eligible to receive the social benefits referred to from the Commonwealth Government.

At the 30th June, 1944, the regulations to implement the provisions of the Act as affecting the issue of exemption certificates had just been promulgated and no certificates had been issued at the beginning of the present year. During the twelve months, however, forty-seven applications were dealt with, as under:—

Exemption certificates granted	34
Exemption certificates declined	8
Exemption certificates deferred	5

BOARDING-OUT OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN.

When the Act was amended in 1943, to empower the Board to board-out aboriginal children who were committed by the courts to the care of the Aborigines Welfare Board, provision was made to enable children to be boarded-out with foster-parents, either in private homes or on aboriginal stations. It has been found that certain children are temperamentally unsuited for institution life, and it is these whom the Board prefers to place with foster-parents. During the year ended 30th June, 1945, thirty-eight children were committed by the courts and admitted as wards to the control of the Aborigines Welfare Board. The placing of these children is as set out hereunder:—

Boarded-out privately with families on aboriginal stations and reserves	8
Boarded-out in private homes off reserves	2
Admitted to Bomaderry Children's Home	10
Placed in approved denominational institutional homes	7
Placed in children's homes under the control of the Aborigines Welfare Board	11

LABOUR CONDITIONS—EMPLOYMENT.

In general, the employment position amongst aborigines throughout the State has continued to be satisfactory during the year. This war period has been a splendid opportunity for aborigines to establish themselves in employment and to prove their worth for retention by their employers when the labour market becomes more competitive after conditions return to normal. Unfortunately, a large proportion of the aboriginal people have not yet manifested stability and a desire to progress in their undertakings. Things may be due, partly, to the

attitude of the employers, some of whom regard them as being inferior in intellect and ability, and whilst this may be true in some measure, it cannot be applied to all. The nature of the employment engaged in by aborigines is dependent mainly on the class of work offering in their particular locality. In the Western areas they are employed largely on pastoral properties and undertake work such as shearing, droving, crutching, boundary riding, etc. In the coastal and inland districts, where forest areas exist, many aborigines are engaged in the timber industry. Some of the best sleeper cutters in this State are aborigines. Within recent years, the farmers on the North Coast, who are engaged in the sugar-cane, banana-growing and dairying industries, have employed considerable numbers of aborigines. During the cane-cutting season on the far northern rivers aboriginal men are organised in cane-cutting gangs and make good money by working under contract. Two aboriginal settlements, namely, Cumeroogunga and Moonah-cullah, are situated near to the Victorian border in the south-western part of the State. For many years both aboriginal men and women, also youths, from these settlements have been employed in the fruit-growing districts in Victoria, chiefly in the vicinity of Shepparton and Mooroopna, where they are engaged on seasonal work, both at fruit picking and in the fruit canning factories. Aborigines from Cowra and Darlington Point settlements obtain seasonal employment on the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area during the fruit-picking and canning season.

At Jervis Bay, the employment is almost entirely that of fishing. The men, here, are organised in fishing teams and have the exclusive fishing rights of the two bays immediately adjacent to Jervis Bay. These aborigines work with nets and some possess their own boats. The Aborigines Welfare Board recently supplied two good fishing boats, together with nets, for the use of those teams who are not in a position to provide their own equipment.

Employment figures for the year are slightly less satisfactory than the two previous years. So far as the aboriginal stations are concerned, employment statistics have been kept and a comparison is set out hereunder showing the number of men in employment during the last quarter of the years 1943, 1944 and 1945:—

Period.	Able-bodied Men on Stations.		
	Number in Residence.	Number in Employment.	Percentage in Employment.
April-June, 1943	573	546	95
April-June, 1944	693	667	96.2
April-June, 1945	543	510	93.3

JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT.

The employment of young aborigines between the ages of fifteen and eighteen is carefully watched by the Board's Officers on the various Stations. At the present time the facilities for teaching trades to young aborigines have not been greatly developed, but this matter will receive the attention of the Board's administration after the War is over and as soon as conditions return to normal. When youths and girls on aboriginal settlements leave school, the officer-in-charge endeavours to find suitable employment for them, and their progress is kept under notice until the young people become stabilised. Many of these young people at the present time are able to command relatively high wages compared with pre-war conditions. Whether this high remuneration will continue after the war is a matter of conjecture.

Children who have been committed to the care of the Aborigines Welfare Board as wards of the State are maintained at the Board's institutions until they reach school-leaving age. They are then given instruction in rural work (for boys) and domestic work (for girls) and after they reach a certain stage of attainment they are placed out in employment with approved employers under apprenticeship conditions.

At the 30th June, 1945, eleven boys and nineteen girls between the ages of fifteen and eighteen years, who were under the Board's control as wards, were in employment under apprenticeship conditions. These young people were visited regularly by the Welfare Inspector and their personal interests carefully safeguarded.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE.

Reports received throughout the year from officers-in-charge of aboriginal stations and reserves disclose that, on the whole, the general health of the aborigines has been satisfactory. It is inevitable, however, that the usual ailments common to communities have occurred from time to time, but nothing of a serious nature has been brought under notice. On some stations and reserves there have been epidemics of measles, whooping cough, scabies and influenza, and these have been

dealt with in a satisfactory manner by the staffs and the mortality rate has not been any higher than that which occurs in the general white community. Constant efforts are maintained on aboriginal stations to teach the aboriginal communities the value of a wholesome diet and personal hygiene. On stations, where possible, a community vegetable garden and dairy herd have been maintained for the use of the people on the station. Residents are encouraged to include vegetables and milk in their diet, and, when full supplies are available, there is no restriction on the quantities made available to them.

The Board realises that the health of the individual is largely influenced by proper feeding during childhood; consequently an arrangement is in existence throughout all stations whereby all children up to school-leaving age are provided every morning at 11 a.m. with a mug of milk (during summer) or cocoa (during winter), together with a liberal slice of bread and butter and a spoonful of malt extract. It has been found that the supply of this mid-morning lunch has had a most beneficial effect on building up the stamina and resistance of the children.

The practice of making use of the Baby Health Centre nurse for advice to expectant and nursing mothers on stations and reserves has continued throughout this year at such centres where a nurse has been stationed conveniently and in close proximity to aboriginal settlements.

As previously reported, the services of the local Bush Nursing Association have been availed of at Pilliga and Woodenbong Aboriginal Stations, where a local doctor is not conveniently stationed.

The Board has continued to provide dental treatment for aborigines on stations and most reserves. On a number of stations in the north-western districts, the services of the Travelling Dental Clinic have been availed of. On other stations the local dentists have visited the stations and have performed the necessary dental service to all those requiring attention.

HOUSING.

The Board consistently adheres to its opinion that self respect and pride on the part of the aboriginal community will develop only when living standards are satisfactory. It is a recognised law of society that man's outlook and attitude towards life is reflected in his manner of living. Whilst aboriginal people remain in small dingy hovels, they will never progress to that desirable stage when they will finally be received in the general community as acceptable citizens.

When the Commonwealth Government made known its intentions regarding post-war reconstruction, the Aborigines Welfare Board submitted a comprehensive building scheme involving the establishment of a number of new stations, children's homes and other necessary institutions. The National Works Council approved of the complete set of proposals and endorsed them as warranting the highest priority, when post-war conditions enable approved work to be put in hand. The programme will include the erection of over 200 homes on aboriginal stations and reserves.

During the year just completed an endeavour was made to meet such urgent building works as could be undertaken with the vote of £8,000 allotted by the Treasury for this purpose. Unfortunately, however, war conditions have brought about almost complete cessation of private building, as man-power and materials are being applied almost exclusively to complete works required by the Navy, Army and the Air Force. An attempt was made to arrange contracts for a number of building works but with only very limited success, and at the end of the year the amount expended on building was only £3,440. The Board expresses the hope that, with the termination of hostilities it will be possible to proceed, without delay, with the vast building programme required to bring aboriginal stations and reserves up to a reasonably good standard.

AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY.

Throughout the war period the aboriginal stations have not been developed agriculturally to the fullest extent, and, in consequence, production has not been so satisfactory as would have been expected in more normal times. It has always been the aim of the Board to develop aboriginal stations to such an extent that eventually they would become self-supporting in respect of food commodities, such as meat, milk, vegetables, etc. The war, however, has brought about conditions that have precluded these plans from being fulfilled. The main deterrents have been lack of labour and lack of machinery. Throughout the past few years most of the able-bodied aboriginal men who reside on stations have been continuously employed at high wages, and, accordingly, they have preferred to work away from stations. On some stations it has been impossible at times even to secure the services of one handyman to attend to the routine jobs that required attention. With regard to machinery, farm implements, tractors, etc., these have been unprocurable during the war years, and even farmers have been forced to apply for implements from the Pool set up by the Government. However, on a large number of stations satisfactory community vegetable gardens have

been maintained and aboriginal residents have been able to obtain vegetables for their home consumption free of cost. Dairy herds are also kept for the station milk supply, and, with the exception of those stations which have been adversely affected by drought, sufficient milk has been produced for the needs of the families.

The South Coast and Riverina aboriginal stations suffered badly as the result of the prolonged drought which broke only a few months before the end of the year. On these stations, particularly Brungle, Cumeroogunga, Menindee and Wallaga Lake, live stock had to be either sold or transferred because of inability to secure fodder to carry them through the drought period. At the conclusion of the year, however, conditions were improving at these stations.

EDUCATION.

This report has already referred to the amendment of the Aborigines Protection Act, 1943, by which aborigines may apply and qualify for a certificate of exemption from the provisions of the Aborigines Act and Regulations. It has been pointed out that certificates may be granted to those persons who fully satisfy the Board as to their eligibility. On the assumption that aborigines who possess certificates of exemption are superior in intellect and mode of living, the Education Department has agreed that the children of any aborigine securing an exemption certificate may be admitted to the ordinary public school, notwithstanding the existence of any special school for aborigines in the district or any decision by the Education Department for general exclusion of aborigines from the public school concerned. The Education Department instructed all teachers to admit any such children who may apply for enrolment, on production of the parents' certificate of exemption. The above move may be regarded as a definite step forward in the general scheme of assimilation, and the Board will continue to impress upon the Education Department the desirability for permitting aboriginal children to attend at ordinary public schools wherever such an arrangement can be practically applied, and provided the aboriginal children concerned are sent to school clean and properly clothed.

It is gratifying to record that a few of the children who are inmates of the homes at Kinchela and Cootamundra are being admitted to the local public school. Two boys at the Kinchela Boys' Home have shown a high degree of intelligence and will probably be sent to the Kempsey High School next year. At the Cootamundra Girls' Home one girl is already attending the Cootamundra Central Public School and negotiations are at present in progress for enrolment of additional girls at an early date.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES ON STATIONS AND RESERVES.

In general, the aborigines of New South Wales, both full-blood and mixed castes, have moved so far away from their tribal customs and spirit life that they can no longer be said to be greatly influenced by their ancestral beliefs. Throughout the years of their contact with white civilisation attempts have been made by missionary organisations to teach these people the basic principles of Christianity. For many years the United Aborigines Mission and the Aborigines Inland Mission organisations have operated on certain stations and reserves and the appointed missionaries have endeavoured to lead the people into an understanding of Christianity.

The Aborigines Welfare Board feels that its function is not so much to attend to the spiritual needs of the aboriginal people as to their material requirements. Nevertheless, every encouragement is given to the missionary bodies and the local clergy to minister to the people at every opportunity. The Board is of the opinion that the various churches should exercise their influence to the fullest extent and manifest more than a passing interest in the aboriginal communities in the various centres where the church may be established. It is universally agreed that the church plays a leading part in the social structure of the community. If, therefore, aborigines are welcomed and accepted into the church membership whilst they are living in aboriginal community groups, they would obviously have that very desirable link when they leave the aboriginal groups to take their place in the general community as citizens in the fullest sense of the word.

The Board has laid down the general principle that there shall be no restriction of claims of any particular accredited religious or missionary organisation to conduct services or religious instruction in the aboriginal communities; in other words, every established denomination shall have an equal right to preach their particular doctrine or creed. The Board has also indicated its preparedness to provide on its stations either one or two buildings for religious worship; one shall be a church and shall be used exclusively for divine worship and the other a hall which could be adapted for religious services, if necessary. These buildings when they become available may be used by the various denominations, if necessary on a roster system.

REFRIGERATORS FOR INLAND STATIONS.

In the inland districts of the State, summer temperatures are generally very high and cause much discomfort to the residents of the aboriginal stations, particularly those who are in bad health. Sick aborigines have the constant care and attention of the matron or nurse on stations and oftentimes it has been found desirable to provide cool and nourishing foods to these ailing people, particularly children and infants. Throughout the years difficulty has been experienced in keeping milk, butter and invalid foods in a wholesome condition during the hot weather, and, recently, the Board was able to provide kerosene operated refrigerators at four of the more remote stations, namely, Brewarrina, Menindee, Deniliquin and Walgett. Approval has also been given for the supply of refrigerators to seven more stations during the coming year, if supplies are maintained from the manufacturers. The stations which will receive refrigerators next year are: Boggabilla, Cowra, Cumeroogunga, Pilliga, Quirindi, Woodenbong, and also Cootamundra Girls' Home. A commercial sized refrigerator was installed at the Kinchela Boys' Home several years ago, and is still functioning satisfactorily.

RELIEF AND BENEFITS TO ABORIGINES FROM THE BOARD.

The Board has continued to exercise care and dispense relief to all aged, infirm, indigent and incapable aborigines throughout the State. This will always be regarded as one of the primary duties of the Board, but it has been made clear to the aborigines that every able-bodied and intelligent person should make an honest attempt to provide for himself and his family. During the war years the conditions have been very favourable to the aboriginal people, and high wages have been earned and, as a result, the number of persons receiving assistance from the Board has considerably decreased. Many families have even left their homes on stations and reserves and have established themselves independently of the Board. A summary of the benefits derived by aborigines from the Board is described briefly hereunder:—

Housing.—As far as possible, every family living on a station or reserve is provided with a little home. Unfortunately during the war period it has not been possible to build many new homes and some families have had to share. The Board has planned to replace unsatisfactory dwellings and to complete many new homes when conditions permit.

Rations.—Every aged, infirm and indigent aborigine receives a full-scale ration. Food items included in the scale constitute a planned ration and have been recommended by the Department of Public Health. The ration includes flour, sugar, tea, coffee, jam or syrup, dripping, potatoes, onions, baking powder, oatmeal, milk, meat. Soap also is provided. Children under 15 years of age receive half quantities, with the exception of milk and meat, which are supplied at full scale. In addition to the standard issue, aborigines are provided with a variety of fresh vegetables in accordance with available supplies grown on the station.

The number of rations issued on the various stations at the beginning and end of the year is shown in the following table:—

Station.	As at 1st July, 1944.		As at 30th June, 1945.	
	Popu- lation.	Re- cipients.	Popu- lation.	Re- cipients.
Bellbrook	124	26	123	32
Boggabilla	214	31	232	38
Brewarrina	189	50	171	43
Brungle	53	14	34	9
Burnt Bridge	260	28	271	21
Burra Bee Dee	115	16	113	16
Cabbage Tree Island	108	17	101	24
Cowra	128	2	114	10
Cumeroogunga	200	21	151	20
Jervis Bay	102	18	101	14
Menindee	198	84	225	98
Moonahcullah	86	5	79	13
Pilliga	96	24	103	13
Quirindi	181	15	183	6
Roseby Park	109	14	108	14
Taree	129	16	128	14
Walgett	116	28	147	40
Wallaga Lake	78	20	65	8
Woodenbong	168	21	156	19
Total	2,654	450	2,605	452

The total number of ration recipients has remained almost at the same figure throughout the whole year.

A return of ration issues to aborigines residing on reserves at the beginning and the end of the year is also set out hereunder:—

Reserve.	As at 1st July, 1944.		As at 30th June, 1945.	
	Popu- lation.	Re- cipients.	Popu- lation.	Re- cipients.
Balranald	34	6	33	...
Baryulgil	38	6	34	4
Bowraville	70	14	144	11
Collarenebri	79	...	72	...
Condoblin	78	14	96	17
Coraki	79	18	80	10
Darlington Pt.	11	16	43	32
Dubbo (Talbragar) ..	45	...	30	...
Forster	57	...	74	...
Goodooga (Dennawan) ..	103	3	90	...
Goolagong	24	...	24	...
Gulgambone	63	2	77	2
Hillston	8	...	8	...
Karuah	46	2	45	1
Kyogle	1	...	23	1
La Perouse	67	...	69	...
Macksville (Eungai) ..	5	...	5	...
Moree	241	5	241	4
Mungindi	77	...	58	...
Nambucca Heads (Stewart's Island)	7	5	3	3
Nymboida	2	1	2	1
Pooncarie	3	2	...	...
Rye Park	11	...	13	...
Tabulam	106	13	115	21
Tibooburra	3	2	2	2
Tingha (Long Gully) ..	37	...	34	...
Ugundahi Is. (Maclean) ..	82	11	80	57
Uralla	17	...	24	...
Walcha (Summervale) ..	48	4	40	4
Wellington (Nanima) ..	40	18	39	27
Wilcannia	42	6	71	2
Yass	52	...	36	2
Total	1,576	148	1,705	201

The total number of rations issued to residents of reserves throughout the State increased considerably during the twelve months. The increase in the number of persons receiving rations is due partly to a decrease in employment, and partly to the fact that the aborigines are, more or less, free agents and are not directed to employment to the same extent as they are on stations.

Clothing.—The difficulties referred to in the last Annual Report in the manufacture and delivery of clothing supplies was not quite so evident this year, although deliveries were rather late. Whilst the necessity for maintaining adequate stocks of clothing for the fighting services continues, there must be an inevitable delay in forwarding supplies of clothing for ordinary civilian use. The following table shows the number of recipients during 1944-45, compared with the total for the previous two years:—

Issue.	Male.			Female.			Total.		
	1942-43.	1943-44.	1944-45.	1942-43.	1943-44.	1944-45.	1942-43.	1943-44.	1944-45.
Summer	242	214	231	306	274	299	548	488	530
Winter	231	183	239	281	267	279	512	450	518
Total	473	397	470	587	541	578	1,060	938	1,048

The figures are not particularly informative insofar as annual requirements are concerned. The high figure quoted for the year ended 30th June, 1945, is attributed to the fact that the Government Clothing Factory was not able to supply full stocks for winter and summer issues during the previous year; consequently, when stocks did eventually become available extra issues were forwarded to compensate for the previous lack of supply.

Blankets.—The established practice of supplying blankets to aborigines in need has been continued. Supplies of blankets are still on a restricted scale, and it has been possible only to supply blankets to aged, sick and destitute aborigines. The number of blankets supplied as free issues to aborigines on stations and reserves during this past year has, however, been much more generous than hitherto. The figures below show that the number of blankets issued was 147 in excess of the previous year:—

Place.	1942-43.	1943-44.	1944-45.
Stations	287	369	450
Reserves	110	83	149
Total	397	452	599

Medical Attention.—On all aboriginal stations throughout the State free drugs and medicine are supplied to resident aborigines, the necessary issues being made by the matron of the station. No effort is spared to bestow sympathetic care and treatment to sick and indigent aborigines. Every station is provided with a medical treatment unit which includes a dispensary. Serious cases of illness are conveyed to the local district hospital where the aborigines receive the same careful and sympathetic treatment as white people.

Baby Outfits.—A complete baby outfit includes 2 singlets, 1 shawl, 1 bonnet, 2 pairs of bootees, 2 petticoats, 2 night-gowns, 2 dresses, 12 napkins. The outfit is provided gratuitously to indigent expectant mothers, but those whose husbands are in receipt of reasonable earnings are required to pay a nominal amount of 25s. to cover the cost of the outfit.

Christmas Cheer.—For many years the Board has made a practice of providing aboriginal residents on stations and reserves with extra food luxury to enable them to enjoy the festive season. Every family receives the ingredients necessary to make a Christmas pudding, and every child up to school-leaving age receives a small Christmas gift. On some stations the manager and teacher in charge of the school arrange a Christmas party at which gifts of food, drinks, etc., are provided by local friends and the Board. This arrangement was repeated again this year.

SOCIAL BENEFITS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.

Child Endowment.—The Board again this year supervised the expenditure of endowment moneys payable to aborigines on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. In accordance with the wishes of the Commonwealth authorities the Board continued to control the expenditure of child endowment by parents who are not sufficiently reliable to handle the payment directly. The following table represents the handling of endowment moneys received on behalf of aborigines during the year ended 30th June, 1945. Figures for the previous two years are also shown, and it will be noted that the number of cases and the total amount administered this year is appreciably less than that of previous years:—

Year ended 30th June.	Amount received from Commonwealth for Administration.	Number of Cases administered at Beginning of Year.	Subtract—		Add—		Cases administered at End of Year.
			Cases Expired.	Cases changed to Direct Pay.	Cases reverted to Board's Control.	New Cases.	
1943	£ 12,698	387	27	65	15	21	331
1944	11,240	331	26	41	13	11	288
1945	10,542	288	16	32	9	19	268

Pensions.—Old age pensions, widows' pensions and invalid pensions are payable by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services to those aborigines who are able to comply with the requirements of the Commonwealth Act. Aborigines who possess a preponderance of aboriginal blood, however, are not eligible to receive any of the pension payments referred to. The Commonwealth authorities also will not approve of pensions being paid to aborigines of any caste, whilst such aborigines are resident upon stations and reserves. If, however, an aborigine obtains a certificate of exemption and undertakes to live independently of the Aborigines Welfare Board and away from all stations and reserves, the Commonwealth Department of Social Services will grant a pension.

The Aborigines Welfare Board considers that the Commonwealth Social Services Act should be more generous in the matter of granting pensions to aborigines who, in the Board's opinion, should be under some measure of control and who may elect to reside on a station or reserve. Representations were made to the Commonwealth authorities on several occasions during the past year, but no success has yet been achieved in the matter.

Generally, the Commonwealth authorities administer pension payments direct, but, during the year, the Board was asked to administer three cases of widows' pensions, two cases of old age pensions and one military pension.

CHILDREN'S HOMES.

One of the important functions of the Aborigines Welfare Board is "to provide for the custody and maintenance of the children of aborigines." In effect, the Board assumes control of aboriginal children after they have been committed by the Children's Court as neglected or uncontrollable children. Children are also frequently admitted to the Board's control at the request of the parent or guardian. In such cases the Board considers applications on their merits, and if it is found that parents are unable to care properly for their children the Board usually assumes control and admits the children to the homes specially established for that purpose. The two homes established and maintained by the Board, namely, Kinchela Boys' Training Home, Macleay River, and Cootamundra Girls' Training Home, continued to function satisfactorily for another year. These homes accommodate children from 5 to 15 years of age. This arrangement is not actually ideal, for it is considered that young children up to 9 years of age should be maintained separately from children over that age. It is the Board's intention, as soon as conditions permit, to establish separate homes where the children can be classified and accommodated according to age groups.

In the previous Annual Report reference was made to the necessity for an infants' home. This need has existed for many years, but the number of infants committed to the care of the Board is steadily increasing and the time will soon arrive when steps will have to be taken to provide special accommodation for these little ones. This may not be possible until after the war, and, meanwhile, the Board is doing its best to place aboriginal infants in special homes run by denominational organisations and public charitable bodies.

Kinchela Boys' Training Home.—This home has, normally, accommodation for fifty boys. At the 30th June, 1945, there were forty-eight inmates as against forty-three at the beginning of the year. There were eleven admissions, five discharges and one death. The five youths discharged were all sent to employment. The death was that of a full-blood boy suffering from osteo-mylitis.

The average age of the inmates was 12 years 5 months.

The general health has been excellent. No major illnesses or deaths were experienced. The home was visited twice during the year by the local Government Medical Officer and also twice by the local dentist, who attended to every boy requiring treatment.

Recreation was amply provided for by the functioning of the Scout Cub Pack and organised games.

The new bathroom blocks, with night conveniences and hot water service, is now functioning very satisfactorily.

The most serious disability of this home is the problem of laundry facilities. This matter is now receiving attention and it is hoped that a small industrial laundry unit will be installed during the coming year. The buildings are in a good state of repair and during the year the main buildings were exterior sheeted with fibro-cement sheets. A new cottage was constructed for the use of the farm assistant and new cow-bails erected on the farm. Water supply is provided from a large well, which produces approximately 2,000 gallons daily. This is barely sufficient and plans are in hand for the provision of a large underground tank for the catchment of all rain water from the buildings.

Education is in the hands of the Education Department. A school is established at the home and is staffed by two lady teachers. Particular attention is being paid to the development of hobbies and handicrafts.

Regular religious instruction and services have been given by the chaplain of the home (the Rev. Ferris) and the Roman Catholic priest visits the home at regular intervals.

Every effort has been made to continue vegetable and farm production and throughout the year the home was 95 per cent. self-supporting in vegetables, milk, cream and butter. Figures for the year show that an average of twenty-two cows were milked, producing 10,829 gallons. After meeting all milk requirements the balance was separated and 2,790 lbs. of butter were manufactured.

Cootamundra Girls' Home.—This home, which is situated on the outskirts of Cootamundra, has accommodation for fifty children. At the beginning of the year forty-eight girls were in residence, as opposed to forty-four girls at the end of the year. Nine girls were discharged to take up employment and five were admitted.

The children have been well cared for and have received sympathetic treatment from the staff and from the townspeople with whom they come in contact.

The health generally was very satisfactory and any illnesses were only of a minor nature. The Government Medical Officer, Dr. Henry, visited the home at regular intervals and examined every girl. Dental attention was given by local dentists, who commented favourably on the condition of the children's teeth. A number of the children had their tonsils removed. Eye conditions caused a little trouble at one stage of the year, but responded well under treatment.

The average attendance of children at the local aborigines' school was forty pupils. Progress generally has been satisfactory. One girl is now attending the local high school and arrangements are now being completed for the admission of a number of the girls to the Cootamundra Central Public School. The attendance of the children at the public school in the town will contribute greatly towards a satisfactory relationship between the dark children and the white community. Competition will be greater and the children should develop a desire to excel at their studies. An average of three girls over fifteen years of age received training in the home for six months prior to being placed out in domestic employment.

The Board desires to express its gratitude to certain teachers from the local public schools at Cootamundra who have interested themselves in the aboriginal children at the home, and who pay weekly visits to the home to conduct singing lessons in a voluntary capacity. The home suffered rather seriously from staff shortages during the year, due, no doubt, to the fact that most women have been absorbed into war-time industries. During a great portion of the year the staff was only at about half strength, and these members were obliged to work at great pressure to meet the difficulties. During May, Mrs. E. C. Hiscocks was appointed as principal of the home, her duties embracing the full charge of the school, as well as the control of the institution. This appointment relieved the position a little, but normal staff arrangements will not be restored until the Board is able to secure the services of a cook and two assistant matrons.

A hot water service was installed during the year and has proved a very useful acquisition to the domestic arrangements.

ABORIGINAL STATIONS.

The number of aboriginal stations maintained by the Board throughout the year remains the same as for the immediate past years. These stations, nineteen in number, are situated throughout all parts of the State and are under the control of resident management. The stations represent communities of aboriginal families under the control of a resident manager and matron. The community settlement comprises a home for each family, school, store, medical treatment annexe, hall, water supply, and, in some cases, a dairy herd and community vegetable garden. An endeavour is made on these stations to cater for the needs of the residents. Able-bodied men are assisted to find employment and every family is expected to provide for its own needs. Sick, aged and infirm, however, are cared for by the Board, and these people receive free food rations, invalid food (if necessary), medical service, blankets (when available), tobacco and other comforts.

All strong able-bodied men who, through force of circumstances, find themselves out of employment, are required to perform a certain amount of work on the station, in return for which they and their families receive food, clothing and other relief. The dairy herd and garden on the station provide milk and vegetables to all families, so far as seasonal supplies will allow.

The stations vary in area from 31 acres to 4,600 acres, such variation being dependent upon the locality, the population and the scope for development. Distribution of population on the stations as at the 30th June, 1945, is grouped as follows:—

Over 200 residents	3 stations.
Between 100 and 200 residents	13 stations.
Under 100 residents	3 stations.

In previous reports it was mentioned that an area of 950 acres had been acquired at Murrin Bridge, Lake Cargelligo, for the purpose of establishing thereon a new up-to-date station for the accommodation of aborigines from Menindee and other Far Western localities. During the year the Murrin Bridge area was surveyed and the position for all buildings, roads, and other requirements pegged out. Plans and specifications of all the necessary buildings were prepared by the Government Architect and tenders will be called very shortly.

Appendix "A," attached to the end of this report, shows that the total population of all stations, as at the 30th June, 1945, was 2,606 persons—a reduction of forty-eight persons on the previous year.

Vital Station Statistics.—Vital statistics for the year were as follows, the previous year's figures being given in parenthesis:—

Births	116	(124)
Deaths	42	(31)
Marriages	22	(14)

ABORIGINAL RESERVES.

Reserves may be described as areas set aside for the use of aborigines, but not under the control of resident management. Most reserves are supervised by the local officer in charge of police though, in a few cases, the local teacher in charge of the aboriginal school acts as non-resident manager. Aborigines who reside on reserves are usually of the more independent type and should be superior to station aborigines in their ability to take care of themselves. This, however, does not always prove to be the case.

Over fifty reserves are set aside for the use of aborigines in various parts of the State, but of this number only thirty-three are at present inhabited by aborigines. Appendix "B" at the end of this report sets out a list of the reserves that are at present inhabited.

The total population on reserves at the end of the year was 1,761—an increase of 136 on the previous year.

During the year two new areas were acquired, these being situated at Gulargambone and Moree. The Gulargambone area is situated on the banks of the Castlereagh River, adjacent to the town. It is well timbered and watered, and will replace the existing reserve which is unsuitable as a living area. The Moree reserve consists of 190 acres situated on the Mchi River and purchased at a cost of £660. It is intended to use this reserve for the establishment of a new up-to-date station, as soon as building operations can be put in hand.

ACCOUNTS AND GENERAL EXPENDITURE.

The Treasury Estimates for the year 1944-45 provided an amount of £56,893 as an allotment to the Aborigines Welfare Board for the relief and benefit of aborigines and for their welfare generally. The actual amount expended was £46,181. The under expenditure was partly due to the fact that war conditions, with attendant scarcity of labour and material, prevented the full appropriation of £10,500 for erection of buildings and repairs and renovations, from being fully expended, the actual amount spent on these items being only £5,500. The Treasury also allocated £3,000 for use in making advances to aborigines for acquirement of property, but conditions were such that it was not possible to expend any of this amount. A saving was effected also in respect of expenditure on food, stores, and general relief to aborigines.

In addition to the expenditure by the Aborigines Welfare Board, an amount of £6,865 represents expenditure incurred by other departments on behalf of the Board. The total amount expended, both by the Board and other departments, was £53,046. An amount of £498 was provided from General Loan Account to meet the balance of the special building work done at the Kinchela Boys' Training Home, in connection with the erection of special bathrooms and night lavatories.

A summary of expenditure for the year ended 30th June, 1945, is set out in Appendix "C" at the end of the report.

CONCLUSION.

The Board again desires to place on record the valuable assistance and co-operation rendered by other Government departments throughout the past year. The assistance given by the Police Department, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Health, Department of Lands, Department of Education, Department of Public Works, the Department of the Chief Secretary and Child Welfare Department is acknowledged with gratitude.

In conclusion, the Board expresses its appreciation to its own staff, both at head office and in the field, for the loyal service rendered throughout the past year.

Dated this twenty-eighth day of February, one thousand nine hundred and forty-six.

For and on behalf of the Aborigines Welfare Board,

S. L. ANDERSON, Chairman.

A. W. G. LIPSCOMB, Executive Member.

APPENDIX "A."

LIST of Aboriginal Stations and Vital Statistics.

Station.	Area.	Population.		Statistics for year ended 30th June, 1945.		
		30th June, 1944.	30th June, 1945.	Births.	Deaths.	Marriages.
	Acres.					
Bellbrook	96	124	123	4	4	2
Boggabilla	457	214	232	10	...	3
Brewarrina	4,638	189	171	4	6	...
Brungle	320	53	34	...	1	...
Burnt Bridge	613	260	270	12	3	2
Burra Bee Dee	023	115	113	6	...	...
Cabbage Tree Island...	125	108	101	6	3	2
Cowra	31	128	114	7	1	...
Cumerooongga	2,600	200	151	5	4	1
Jervis Bay	100	102	101	5	1	3
Menindee	1,000	198	225	14	4	2
Moonahullah	232	86	79	...	...	...
Pilliga	150	96	105	8	2	...
Quirindi	220	181	183	9	3	2
Roseby Park	66	109	108	5	4	1
Taree	51	129	128	4	...	1
Walgett	337	116	147	10	1	1
Wallaga Lake	341	78	65	2	...	1
Woolenbong	126	168	156	5	5	1
Total .....	...	2,654	2,606	116	42	22

APPENDIX "B."

LIST of Aboriginal Reserves.

Reserve.	Area.	Population.	
		30-6-44.	30-6-45.
	Acres.		
Balranald	140	34	35
*Baryulgil (Settlement only) ...	40	38	34
Bowraville	90	70	144
Collarenebri	50	79	72
*Condobolin	16	78	96
Coraki	10	79	80
Darlington Point	25	11	4
*Dubbo (Talbragar)	18	45	33
*Forster	19	57	74
Goodooga (includes Dennawan)	80	103	90
Goolagong	80	24	24
*Gulgambone	70	66	77
Hillston	98	8	8
*Karuah	50	46	54
*Kyogle	115	1	23
La Perouse	6	67	69
Macksville (Eungai)	20	5	5
Moree	12	241	241
Mungindi	100	77	58
Nambucca Heads (Stewart Is.)	70	7	3
Nymboida	35	2	2
Pooncarie	620	3	...
Rye Park	140	11	13
*Tabulam	100	106	115
Tibooburra	100	3	2
Tuncester	6	55	60
*Tingha (Long Gully).....	15	37	34
*Ulgundahi Is. (Maclean)	40	82	103
Uralla	100	17	24
*Walcha (Summervale)	107	48	40
*Wellington (Nanima)	100	40	39
Wilcannia	100	42	71
*Yass	9	52	36
Total .....	...	1,634	1,761

NOTE.—* Signifies Aboriginal School on Reserve.

APPENDIX "C."

STATEMENTS OF EXPENDITURE FOR Year ended 30th June, 1945.

Accounts and General Expenditure—	£	£
The total amount expended on the welfare and relief of aborigines during the year ended 30th June, 1945, was		53,046
Details of expenditure are as set out hereunder:—		
Direct Expenditure incurred by Board—		
Buildings and Repairs, etc.	2,245	
Salaries and Wages	15,978	
Maintenance of, and Assistance to, Aborigines	13,496	
Freight, Cartage, Travelling Expenses, Purchase of Machinery and Plant, and other expenditure of a miscellaneous nature	14,462	
		46,181
Expenditure incurred by other Departments, on behalf of the Board—		
Government Stores Department, for purchase of clothing, stores, stationery, and other supplies	4,455	
Department of Public Health, for medical fees, etc.	167	
Department of Works and Local Government, for telephone services	708	
Resumed Properties Department, for sanitary services	1,360	
Government Printer, for printing and book-binding	175	
		6,865
Total		53,046

NOTE.— The total does not include an amount of £15,705 expended by the Department of Education for the education of aboriginal children in native schools.

Sydney: Thomas Henry Tennant, Government Printer—1946.