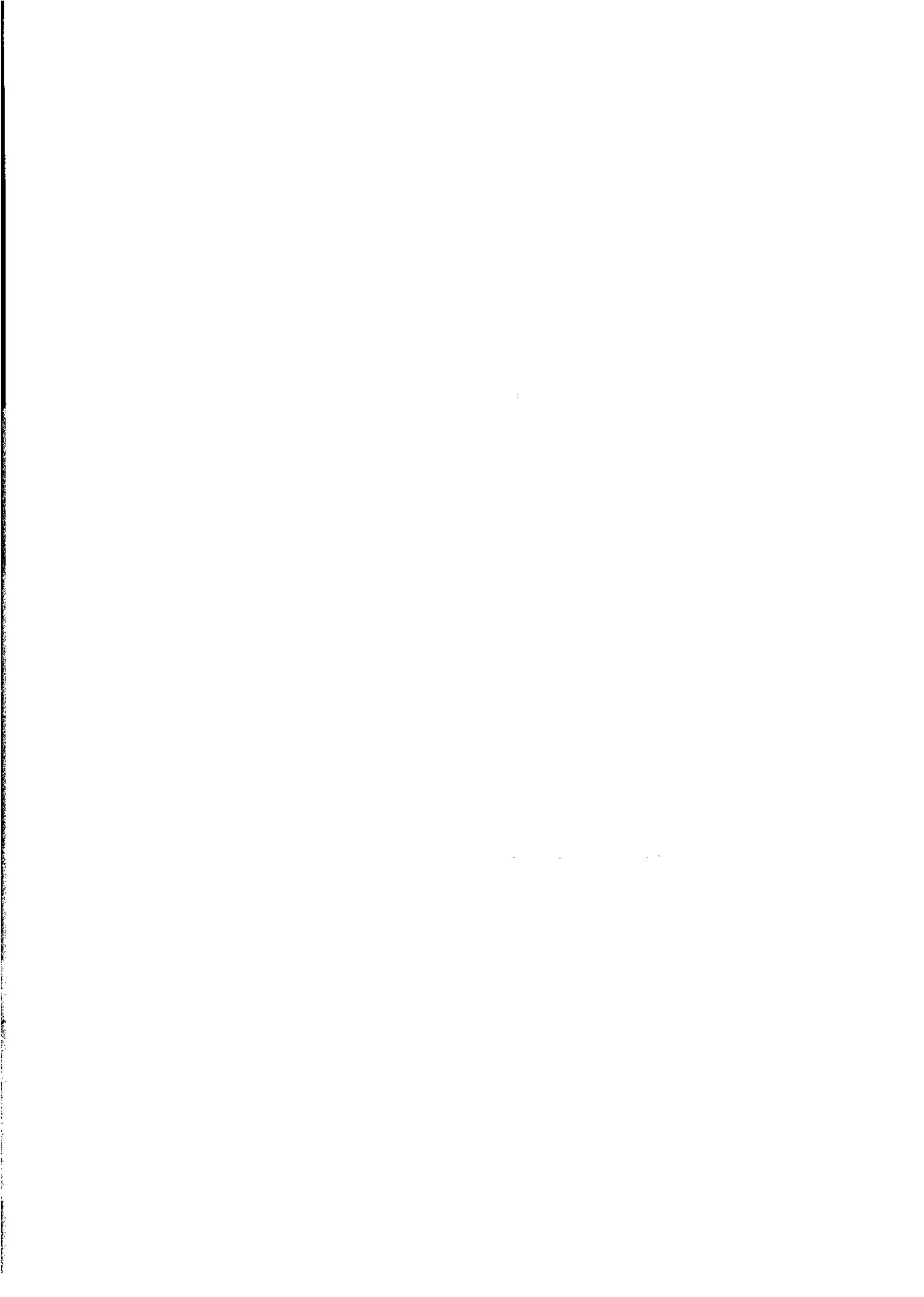




# 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey

## Torres Strait Islanders Queensland

**C**entre for  
**A**boriginal  
**E**conomic  
**P**olicy  
**R**esearch



**NEW ISSUE**

# **1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey**

## **Torres Strait Islanders Queensland**

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Australian Bureau  
of Statistics**

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AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) THURS 22 MAY 1997

ABS Catalogue No. 4179.3

ISBN 0 642 23205 9

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Printed and bound by Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra

## INQUIRIES

- For information about other ABS statistics and services, please refer to the back page of this publication.
- For further information about these statistics, contact Tony Barnes on Darwin (08) 8943 2190.

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## PREFACE .....

*National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Torres Strait Islanders, Queensland*, is one of a series of statistical publications, which present results from the first nationwide survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people conducted in 1994. The purpose of these publications is to provide detailed information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They provide a range of information to assist governments and non-government agencies to plan programs and services to meet the needs of Indigenous people.

The survey was conducted as a part of the Government's response to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. It was the paucity of statistical information about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population which led to recommendation 49 of the Royal Commission:

That proposals for a special national survey covering a range of social, demographic, health and economic characteristics of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population with full Aboriginal participation at all levels be supported.

In response to this recommendation, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey was conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) from April to July 1994. A range of results from this survey were published beginning with the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Detailed Findings* (4190.0). Other publications from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey include seven State publications *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey* (4190.1-7), *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: ATSI Regional Statistics* (4196.00.001-036), *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Australia's Indigenous Youth* (4197.0), *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Employment Outcomes for Indigenous Australians* (4199.0), *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Health of Indigenous Australians* (4395.0), *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Housing Characteristics and Conditions* (4187.0).

This publication contains a range of statistics on family and culture; health; education and training; employment and income; and law and justice, as they relate to persons of Torres Strait Islander origin in Queensland.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....

*National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Torres Strait Islanders, Queensland* was prepared as a collaborative exercise between the National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics (NCATSIS) of the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) at the Australian National University. The initial manuscript was prepared by Bill Arthur (CAEPR).



For a variety of social and economic reasons, since the Second World War, Torres Strait Islanders (Islanders) have moved from the Torres Strait (Strait) to the Australian mainland where it is believed that the majority of them now live. Although at one level all Islanders are part of a single cultural grouping, in many respects socially, politically and economically they can be said to form two separate populations, one in the Strait and the other on the mainland. This has been recognised to a degree by the formation of different bodies to be responsible for their policies, namely the Torres Strait Regional Authority (responsible for the Strait), and the Office of Torres Strait Islander Affairs within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) in Canberra, (responsible for the mainland).

The following chapters describe and analyse the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS) data for these two Islander populations, discussing their differences and similarities. For reasons outlined in the Technical Note, the statistics and discussion in this publication are restricted to Islanders living in Queensland. Those persons referred to as living in the Strait are within the Torres Strait Regional Authority's area (TSRA). The other group, referred to as mainlanders, are within the seven ATSIC regions on the mainland of Queensland (chapter 2).

Generally, Islanders have a strong sense of culture and identity (chapter 3). They state that they identify with clans or language groups, recognise a homeland, and attend cultural activities more than the national Indigenous average. As we would expect, these cultural markers are present in the Strait but they are also present on the mainland and tend to confirm other sources which stress that Islanders on the mainland retain a strong sense of culture and identity (Beckett 1987). This point is reinforced by the high proportion of mainlanders who still view the Strait as their homeland and who feel they can live there if they wish.

On the other hand, at a social and economic level, it is possible to see some differences between the two populations which reflect their different social and economic environments.

Islanders on the mainland tend to be more highly educated than those in the Strait, have a higher command of English, are more interested in doing further study and experience fewer difficulties engaging in further study (chapters 3 and 5). Also, mainlanders are more likely to be in full-time employment and to be unemployed for shorter periods than those in the Strait (chapter 6). These results appear to reflect the different circumstances in the Strait and on the mainland. First, there are relatively more educational facilities on the mainland, but also the labour market there will demand greater levels of education and qualifications. The Strait's labour market is heavily influenced by the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme, which appears to be less discriminating regarding educational requirements, whereas the labour market on the mainland is mainstream and this seems more selective of skills in English (chapter 6). Islander women seem to perform better in the education system than men. For instance, women are more likely to stay at school longer and to have a post-school qualification than Islander men, particularly on the mainland. On the other

hand, as within the national Indigenous population, Islander males perform better in the labour force than Islander females. It is worth noting that one of the difficulties experienced by mainlanders looking for work is access to child-care services, and this may influence the labour force status of Islander women.

Despite the generally higher level of education and post-school qualifications found on the mainland, Islanders in the Strait are more involved in school decision-making, no doubt reflecting the more community-oriented schooling there (chapter 5).

Other socioeconomic differences are also reflected in the NATSIS results. Earlier research has pointed out that job opportunities are limited in the Strait (Arthur 1994) and this is borne out by the survey data which show that a higher proportion of unemployed Islanders feel that there are simply no jobs available for them there (chapter 6). On the other hand, the results also show that Islanders in the Strait do more fishing and gardening than do those on the mainland; a direct indicator of the greater access to natural resources there than on the mainland (Arthur & Taylor 1994). However, despite some of these differences, personal median incomes in the Strait are very similar to those on the mainland, and these in turn are of the same magnitude as those of the national Indigenous average.

Generally, the data suggest that Islanders, particularly those in the Strait are highly aware of health issues. Although a high percentage of Islanders in the Strait consider themselves to be in good health, the majority are either overweight or obese (chapter 4). Several health concerns were perceived as being problematic. In the Strait, diabetes was the most common of these, whereas on the mainland it was alcohol. In all cases, alcohol emerges as the most commonly reported perceived substance problem, marijuana being the second most commonly reported. It is notable that Islanders' perception of glue and petrol sniffing as a problem, is similar to the national average for Indigenous people.

Generally, Islanders have less contact with the police and the legal system than the national Indigenous average. However, mainlanders are more likely to have some contact than are those in the Strait (chapter 7). Mainlanders also have a more negative perception of the police than Islanders in the Strait. These findings may be associated with mainlanders living in urban and so possibly more stressful situations than people in the Strait. Furthermore, mainlanders' perceptions of the police may be affected by their more limited access to Indigenous police services.

It has been estimated that the Islander population at the time of contact with Europeans early in the 17th Century was between 4,000 and 5,000 (Beckett 1987, p. 26). The national Torres Strait Islander population count from the 1991 Census was 26,880 which represented an increase of 178% in the 20 years since 1971 (table 2.1). It should be noted however, that there are some doubts as to the accuracy of census counts of the Islander population (see the Technical Note). These doubts are based, in part, on the concern that people from other 'island' regions such as those in the South Pacific, the Mediterranean, and Bass Strait may incorrectly identify as Torres Strait Islanders in the Census (Arthur 1992a; Evans, Kahles & Bate 1993, p. 13).

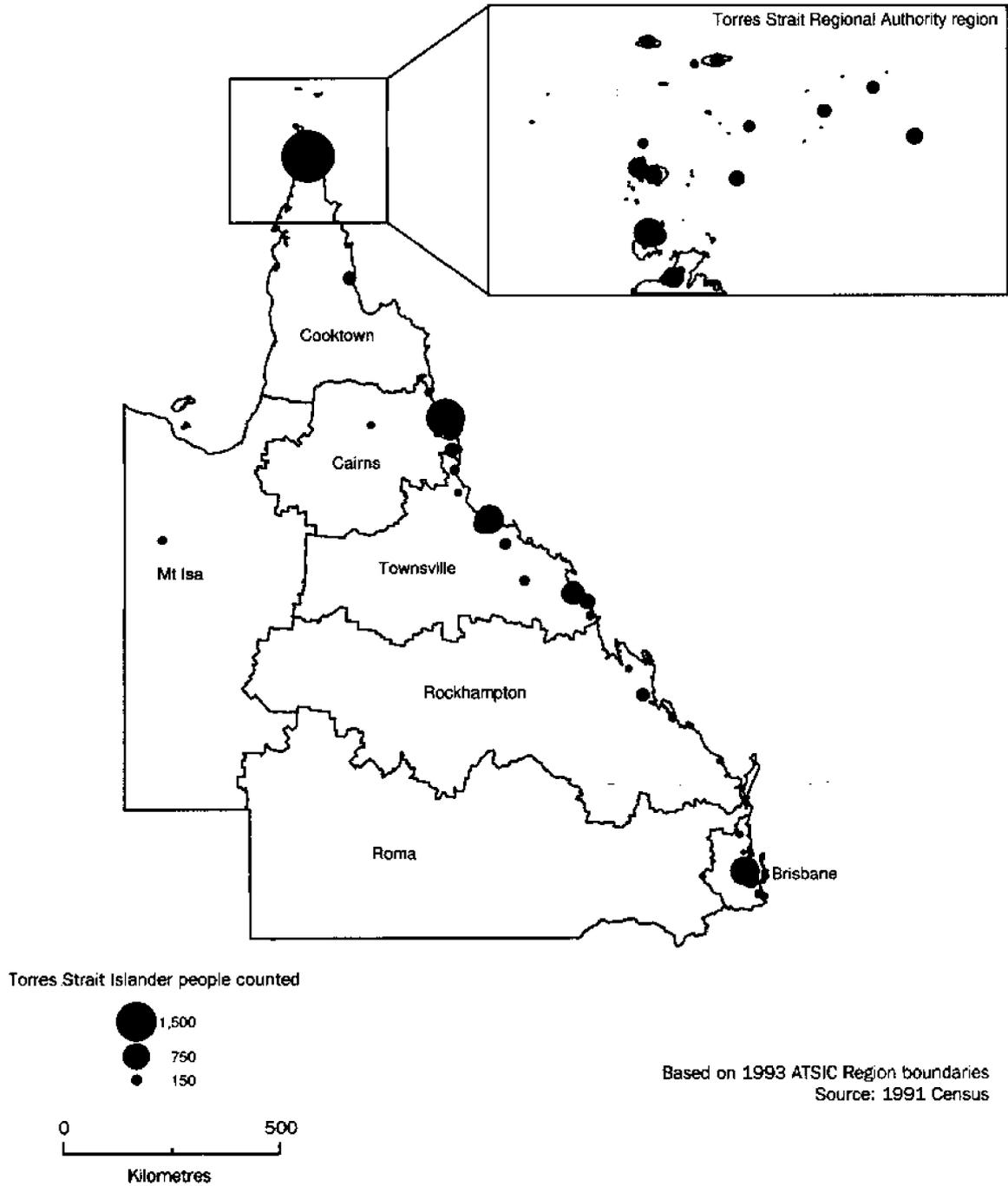
2.1 TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POPULATION .....

|                        | CENSUSES..... |                |                |                |                | NATSIS.. |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------|
|                        | 1971          | 1976           | 1981           | 1986           | 1991           | 1994     |
| Queensland<br>(change) | 7 510         | 9 400<br>+25%  | 10 730<br>+14% | 13 170<br>+23% | 14 650<br>+11% | 15 720   |
| Australia<br>(change)  | 9 660         | 16 530<br>+71% | 15 230<br>-8%  | 21 540<br>+41% | 26 880<br>+25% | 17 720   |

For a number of social and political reasons, Islanders moved from the Strait to the Australian mainland following the end of the Second World War (Beckett 1987; Taylor & Arthur 1992) with the result that by 1991 some 5,400 (20%) were recorded as residing in the Strait and 21,480 (80%) were recorded as residing on the mainland of Australia (table 2.3). Of the 21,480 Islanders on the Australian mainland, 9,250 or 43% were recorded as residing in Queensland (table 2.3).

Torres Strait Islanders are all part of the Melanesian cultural group (Beckett 1987). However, Islanders in the Strait reside in different circumstances and experience different social, economic and political environments to those on the mainland. The Strait is an archipelago of small islands and coral reefs where Islanders, many of whom live in close-knit communities, are in the numerical majority and are living on their traditional lands (Arthur 1990). They have free access to the land and the sea and can participate in commercial fishing and subsistence activities. They also have their own administrative and policy making body, the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA). The TSRA is responsible for a range of specific government programs, services and funds for Islanders in the Strait.

2.2 DISTRIBUTION OF THE TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POPULATION—1991



Note: Only Local Government Areas (LGA) with more than 80 Torres Strait Islander people are indicated.

### 2.3 DISTRIBUTION OF THE TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POPULATION—1991

| Region                      | no.           | %          |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Torres Strait(a)            | 5 400         | 20         |
| Australian mainland         |               |            |
| Queensland mainland         | 9 250         | 34         |
| Rest of Australian mainland | 12 230        | 46         |
| <b>All Australia</b>        | <b>26 880</b> | <b>100</b> |

(a) The area administered by the Torres Strait Regional Authority includes two Islander communities at the northern tip of Cape York namely Bamaga and Seisia (Arthur 1994). The Torres Strait is part of the State of Queensland.

On the mainland, Islanders are a cultural and numerical minority, with respect to both Aborigines and non-Indigenous Australians — a minority within the Indigenous minority. They reside mainly in urban coastal centres where they must articulate with the majority non-Indigenous culture, economy and labour market and, unlike Islanders in the Strait, they do not reside on their traditional lands. Islanders have established some church and socio-political organisations in centres such as Cairns, Townsville, and Brisbane (Beckett 1987). In addition, to cater for their distinctive needs at a policy level the Office of Torres Strait Islander Affairs (OTSIA) has been set up within ATSIC in Canberra. The OTSIA has a Torres Strait Advisory Board and together their charter is to represent the policy interests of Islanders on the mainland. However, there are indications that Islanders on the mainland clearly perceive that they have minority status within the Indigenous realm (ATSIC 1996).

Although Islanders identify as such, regardless of where they reside, the above illustrates how Islander society can be viewed as comprising two populations living in two different economic and social environments: the Strait and the mainland, each with its own official body responsible for policy matters. The contrasting economic, social and political environments has an important impact on the characteristics of the two populations. A major aim of this publication is to describe these characteristics and to assess the extent of their differences.

However, as noted in the Technical Note within this document only NATSIS data for Queensland (the Torres Strait Regional Authority region and the seven ATSIC regions in the rest of Queensland) are considered sufficiently reliable for presentation here. For ease of description, the 'rest of Queensland' is referred to as 'the mainland' throughout the remainder of this publication. Also, to provide a benchmark for the socioeconomic status of the two Islander populations, a comparison with the total national Indigenous population is included in the tables and text.

## 2.4 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF INDIGENOUS POPULATION

|                              | YEARS..... |       |       |     | <i>Total</i> |
|------------------------------|------------|-------|-------|-----|--------------|
|                              | 0-14       | 15-24 | 25-44 | 45+ |              |
|                              | %          | %     | %     | %   |              |
| .....                        |            |       |       |     |              |
| <b>Strait Islander</b>       |            |       |       |     |              |
| <b>Males</b>                 | 37         | 11    | 32    | 20  | 3 100        |
| <b>Females</b>               | 34         | 17    | 26    | 23  | 3 300        |
| <b>Persons</b>               | 35         | 14    | 29    | 22  | 6 400        |
| .....                        |            |       |       |     |              |
| <b>Mainlanders</b>           |            |       |       |     |              |
| <b>Males</b>                 | 41         | 26    | 24    | 9   | 4 400        |
| <b>Females</b>               | 38         | 26    | 22    | 14  | 5 000        |
| <b>Persons</b>               | 39         | 26    | 23    | 12  | 9 400        |
| .....                        |            |       |       |     |              |
| <b>Australian Indigenous</b> |            |       |       |     |              |
| <b>Males</b>                 | 40         | 20    | 28    | 12  | 152 400      |
| <b>Females</b>               | 38         | 20    | 29    | 13  | 150 900      |
| <b>Persons</b>               | 39         | 21    | 28    | 12  | 303 300      |
| .....                        |            |       |       |     |              |

Islanders, aged 13 years and over, in the Strait identify with a clan or language group in slightly higher proportions than do those on the mainland (72% versus 59%) (table 3.1). To this extent, mainlanders identify at the same rate, and Strait Islanders identify at a higher rate, than do Indigenous people nationally (60%).

Islanders in any part of Australia will tend to identify an island in the Torres Strait as their homeland either by birth and/or ancestry. Thus, responses by Islanders in NATSIS about 'homelands/traditional country' can be taken to refer to the islands of the Torres Strait.

Considering tables 3.1 and 3.2, 93% of Islanders in the Strait recognise it as their homeland and of these people 99% feel free to live there. A high proportion of mainlanders recognise the Strait as their homeland (79%) and 96% of these people feel free to live there. Overall, these data suggest that a significant proportion of Islanders in both the Strait and on the mainland identify the Strait as their homeland (Beckett 1987; Taylor & Arthur 1992). Islanders tend to recognise homelands to a higher degree than do the national Indigenous population.

**3.1 SELECTED CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS(a)**  
.....

| <i>Selected cultural characteristics</i>              | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |
| PROPORTION (%)  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Whether identifies with clan tribal or language group |                             |                               |                                  |
| Identifies  | 72                          | 59                            | 60                               |
| Does not identify                                     | 24                          | 35                            | 34                               |
| Does not know if identifies, or not stated            | *4                          | *6                            | 6                                |
| <i>Total</i>  | <i>100</i>                  | <i>100</i>                    | <i>100</i>                       |
| Recognition of homeland                               |                             |                               |                                  |
| Recognises homeland                                   | 93                          | 79                            | 75                               |
| Does not recognise homeland                           | 6                           | 21                            | 25                               |
| Not stated  | **1                         | —                             | —                                |
| <i>Total</i>  | <i>100</i>                  | <i>100</i>                    | <i>100</i>                       |
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |
| NUMBER  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons   | 4 300                       | 5 900                         | 197 500                          |
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |

(a) Persons aged 13 years and over.

## 3.2 RECOGNISES HOMELAND(a)

| <i>Relationship with homeland</i>      | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)                         |                             |                               |                                  |
| Access to homeland                     |                             |                               |                                  |
| Allowed to live in homeland            | 99                          | 96                            | 95                               |
| Not allowed to live in homeland        | **—                         | **—                           | 1                                |
| Does not know if allowed to live there | **—                         | *1                            | 1                                |
| Not stated                             | *1                          | *3                            | 3                                |
| <i>Total</i>                           | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Residence in homeland                  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Presently lives in homeland            | 70                          | 12                            | 40                               |
| Does not presently live in homeland    | 30                          | 87                            | 59                               |
| Not stated                             | **—                         | **1                           | **1                              |
| <i>Total</i>                           | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Whether grew up in homeland            |                             |                               |                                  |
| Grew up in homelands                   | 78                          | 56                            | 74                               |
| Did not grow up in homelands           | 22                          | 43                            | 25                               |
| Not stated                             | **—                         | **1                           | 1                                |
| <i>Total</i>                           | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| NUMBER                                 |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons                                | 4 000                       | 4 700                         | 148 500                          |

(a) Persons aged 13 years and over who recognise a homeland.

A significantly higher proportion of Islanders in the Strait than on the mainland speak mainly a Torres Strait Islander language or Creole (Shnukal 1983) (81% versus 20%) (table 3.3). Conversely, mainlanders are more likely to use English as their principle language (70% versus 12%), and to speak more than one language (45% versus 10%). These data possibly reflect the fact that mainlanders live mostly in coastal urban centres (Arthur & Taylor 1994; Map 2.2) where a higher command of English may be necessary to access the labour market and society in general (chapter 6). Although a large percentage (80%) of all Islanders aged 13 years and over say they do not experience any difficulty communicating in English, this is slightly below the Indigenous average of 87% (ABS 1995).

Islanders in the Strait attend cultural events slightly more than do those on the mainland (table 3.4) and it is noticeable that both Islanders in the Strait and on the mainland attend cultural events more than do the Indigenous population generally. Funerals are the most attended of all cultural events by Australia's Indigenous people. The particularly high attendance of Islanders at funerals shown in table 3.4 is probably due to the importance of 'tombstone opening ceremonies' in Islander culture (Beckett 1987).



### 3.3 LANGUAGE AND NUMBER OF LANGUAGES SPOKEN(a)

| <i>Languages spoken</i>   | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |
| PROPORTION (%)  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Main language spoken  |                             |                               |                                  |
| English   | 12                          | 70                            | 80                               |
| Broken English, Aboriginal English, pidgin<br>English or Creole | 65                          | 12                            | 3                                |
| Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language                   | 16                          | 8                             | 14                               |
| Other, none, not applicable, not stated                         | **7                         | **10                          | 3                                |
| <i>Total</i>  | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Number of languages   |                             |                               |                                  |
| Speaks one language only  | 90                          | 55                            | 32                               |
| Speaks more than one language                                   | 10                          | 45                            | 68                               |
| Not stated/applicable   | **—                         | **—                           | **—                              |
| <i>Total</i>  | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |
| NUMBER  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons   | 5 600                       | 7 700                         | 258 700                          |
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |

(a) Persons aged five years and over.

### 3.4 ATTENDED CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN LAST 12 MONTHS(a)

| <i>Activities(b)</i>     | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| .....                    |                             |                               |                                  |
| PROPORTION (%)           |                             |                               |                                  |
| Funerals                 | 82                          | 77                            | 54                               |
| Festivals and carnivals  | 62                          | 46                            | 43                               |
| Ceremonies               | 58                          | 45                            | 21                               |
| Involved in organisation | 25                          | 25                            | 22                               |
| .....                    |                             |                               |                                  |
| NUMBER                   |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons                  | 4 300                       | 6 100                         | 197 500                          |
| .....                    |                             |                               |                                  |

(a) Persons aged 13 years and over.

(b) More than one answer may have been given.

As within the national indigenous population, most Islander households consist of just one family (table 3.5). However, on average, households in the Strait are larger than those on the mainland (containing 4.2 persons versus 3.0 persons). Strait and mainland households appear to be similar regarding the number of income units and dependent children (table 3.5).

### 3.5 HOUSEHOLDS

| <i>Household characteristics</i> | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)                   |                             |                               |                                  |
| Households                       |                             |                               |                                  |
| One family households            | 74                          | 75                            | 76                               |
| All others                       | 26                          | *25                           | 24                               |
| Total                            | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Income units                     |                             |                               |                                  |
| One                              | *42                         | 42                            | 54                               |
| More than one                    | *58                         | 58                            | 46                               |
| Total                            | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Dependent children               |                             |                               |                                  |
| 0-1                              | *50                         | *55                           | 57                               |
| 2 and more                       | *50                         | *45                           | 43                               |
| Total                            | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| NUMBER                           |                             |                               |                                  |
| Households                       | 1 500                       | 3 100                         | 84 600                           |

A similar proportion of Islanders who live in rented housing in both the Strait and on the mainland feel that their housing does not meet their needs (25% and 22% respectively). Thus, the survey indicates that Islanders are no more or less satisfied with their rented accommodation than the national Indigenous population, 24% of whom also feel that their housing is not satisfactory (ABS 1995, p. 25).

Table 3.6 shows that the most common type of Islander family consists of a couple with children. This is also the most common type of family within the national Indigenous population. There is little difference between the types of Islander family found in the Strait and on the mainland. However families consisting of childless couples are somewhat more common in the Strait.

### 3.6 FAMILY TYPES

| <i>Family type</i>      | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)          |                             |                               |                                  |
| Couple with children    | 57                          | 59                            | 53                               |
| One parent              | 22                          | 27                            | 29                               |
| Couple without children | 21                          | 11                            | 15                               |
| Other individuals       | —                           | *3                            | 3                                |
| Total                   | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| NUMBER                  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Families                | 1 700                       | 3 000                         | 84 900                           |

Whereas Islanders on the mainland judge their health status to be approximately the same as the national Indigenous average, those in the Strait perceive themselves to be in slightly better health than both mainlanders and the national Indigenous population (table 4.1). Islanders in the Strait are less likely to have a current or long-term health condition than those on the mainland (table 4.1).

**4.1 ALL PERSONS, Self-assessed Health Status(a)**  
.....

| <i>Health status</i>                                  | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |
| PROPORTION (%)  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Self-assessed health status                           |                             |                               |                                  |
| Very good or excellent                                | 62                          | 56                            | 56                               |
| Fair or good  | 37                          | 42                            | 42                               |
| Poor or not stated                                    | *1                          | **2                           | **2                              |
| <i>Total</i>  | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Whether has a specified current health condition(b)   |                             |                               |                                  |
| Has a condition                                       | 26                          | 35                            | 41                               |
| Does not have a condition                             | 74                          | 65                            | 59                               |
| <i>Total</i>  | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Whether has a specified long-term health condition(b) |                             |                               |                                  |
| Has a condition                                       | 18                          | 30                            | 35                               |
| Has no condition or not stated                        | 82                          | 70                            | 65                               |
| <i>Total</i>  | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |
| NUMBER  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons   | 6 400                       | 9 300                         | 303 300                          |
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |

(a) The health status of persons under 13 years was assessed by a responsible adult.

(b) Includes asthma, diabetes, heart problems, chest problems, skin problems, high blood pressure, ear or hearing problems, eye problems and kidney problems.

Islanders are less likely to smoke than are Indigenous people nationally (table 4.2).

The percentage of Islanders on the mainland who drink (60%) is similar to that of the national Indigenous population 62% (table 4.2) but the percentage of people who drink alcohol in the Strait is considerably lower (44%). Furthermore, female Islanders on the mainland are more likely to drink alcohol than are females in the Strait: 52% of female Islanders on the mainland drink, compared to only 27% in the Strait.

Islanders are more likely to be overweight or obese than they are to have an acceptable weight in both the Strait and on the mainland. Thus Islanders are considerably overweight compared to the national Indigenous population. This finding is more pronounced amongst Islanders in the Strait than on the mainland. Indeed, the proportion of those who are overweight or obese varies considerably. Amongst Strait

Islanders it is 65%, amongst the mainland Islanders it is 56% and for the national Indigenous population it is 44%.

**4.2 HEALTH RISK FACTORS**

| Health status        | Strait<br>Islanders | Mainland<br>Islanders | Australian<br>Indigenous |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)       |                     |                       |                          |
| Cigarette smokers(a) | 41                  | 42                    | 50                       |
| Alcohol drinkers(a)  | 44                  | 60                    | 62                       |
| Relative weight(b)   |                     |                       |                          |
| Underweight          | 1                   | 7                     | 8                        |
| Acceptable weight    | 18                  | 12                    | 23                       |
| Overweight or obese  | 65                  | 56                    | 44                       |
| Not measured         | 16                  | 25                    | 25                       |
| Total                | 100                 | 100                   | 100                      |
| NUMBER               |                     |                       |                          |
| Persons              | 4 300               | 5 900                 | 197 500                  |

(a) Persons aged 13 years and over.

(b) Persons aged 18 years and over.

Islanders in the Strait most commonly give diabetes and alcohol as their main health problems (table 4.3). These results accord with the official morbidity statistics which show that 33% of Islander excess deaths are due to diabetes (Hockley 1993). Islanders on the mainland and the national Indigenous population, most commonly give alcohol and drugs as their main health problems (table 4.3).

A very high proportion of the Islander population in the Strait consider that several health issues are problematic, for example, 81% record that diabetes is a problem, 79% that alcohol is a problem, 72% that nutrition is a problem, and 70% that heart conditions are a problem (table 4.3). These figures are generally higher in the Strait than amongst both mainland Islanders and the national Indigenous population. Taken together, these data would suggest that the population in the Strait feel that it has a number of severe health problems and this is indeed confirmed by the official health statistics (Hockley 1993). These survey results tend to contrast with the observation (table 4.1) that a high proportion (62%) of the Islander population in the Strait consider their health to be very good or excellent. This apparent inconsistency may be the result of differences in interpretation among the Islander population in the Strait about what constitutes the notion of 'very good or excellent health'. Or, the explanation for the difference may partly lie in the fact that in the survey the health perception questions applied to health problems generally whereas the health status questions applied to the respondents' own health.

### 4.3 PERCEIVED MAIN HEALTH PROBLEM(a)

| <i>Perceived problem(b)</i>                | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)                             |                             |                               |                                  |
| Diabetes                                   | 81                          | 31                            | 22                               |
| Alcohol                                    | 79                          | 60                            | 59                               |
| Nutrition                                  | 72                          | 31                            | 20                               |
| Heart condition                            | 70                          | 19                            | 14                               |
| Drugs                                      | 69                          | 32                            | 30                               |
| Skin problems                              | 39                          | 15                            | 10                               |
| Other substances, other medical conditions | 27                          | *17                           | 11                               |
| Did not know or not stated                 | *15                         | *25                           | 30                               |
| NUMBER                                     |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons                                    | 4 300                       | 5 900                         | 194 400                          |

(a) Persons aged 13 years and over.

(b) More than one answer may have been given.

In all cases, alcohol and marijuana are commonly considered to be problem substances (table 4.4). Surprisingly, a slightly higher proportion of Islanders in the Strait and on the mainland perceive petrol and glue sniffing as problematic than do the national Indigenous population.

Generally, a high proportion of those surveyed are happy with their health service, and this was particularly so in the Strait (92%) (table 4.5).

### 4.4 PERCEIVED MAIN SUBSTANCE PROBLEM(a)

| <i>Substance problem(b)</i> | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)              |                             |                               |                                  |
| Alcohol                     | 84                          | 79                            | 76                               |
| Marijuana                   | 73                          | 63                            | 53                               |
| Other substances            | 42                          | 29                            | 14                               |
| Other drugs                 | 32                          | 18                            | 22                               |
| Petrol sniffing             | 17                          | 21                            | 15                               |
| Glue sniffing               | 16                          | 18                            | 12                               |
| Not stated                  | *1                          | **2                           | 1                                |
| NUMBER                      |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons                     | 4 300                       | 5 900                         | 194 400                          |

(a) Persons aged 13 years and over.

(b) More than one answer may have been given.

An equally high proportion of those surveyed indicate that they feel it is important that Islander and Aboriginal people are involved in providing health services (table 4.5).

## 4.5 PERCEPTION OF LOCAL HEALTH SERVICES(a)

| <i>Perception of health service</i>                        | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)   |                             |                               |                                  |
| Happy or sometimes happy                                   | 92                          | 84                            | 85                               |
| Not happy  | 6                           | *5                            | 7                                |
| No contact with health service, not applicable, not stated | **2                         | 11                            | 8                                |
| <i>Total</i>   | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| NUMBER   |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons  | 4 300                       | 5 900                         | 194 400                          |

(a) Persons aged 13 years and over.

## 4.6 IMPORTANCE OF INDIGENOUS INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH SERVICES(a)

| <i>Perceived importance of involvement</i> | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)                             |                             |                               |                                  |
| Important                                  | 89                          | 84                            | 78                               |
| Not important                              | **—                         | 11                            | 14                               |
| Didn't know, not applicable, not stated    | *11                         | *5                            | 8                                |
| <i>Total</i>                               | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| NUMBER                                     |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons                                    | 4 300                       | 5 900                         | 194 400                          |

(a) Persons aged 13 years and over.

Islanders complete a higher level of schooling than do Indigenous people nationally, and Islanders on the mainland complete a slightly higher level of schooling than do Strait-based Islanders. For instance, of all school leavers, 24% of Islanders in the Strait and 29% of those on the mainland have completed Year 11 or 12 compared to 18% within the national Indigenous population (table 5.1).

Also, Islander females achieve at school rather better than Islander males in both the Strait and on the mainland. In the Strait 29% of females achieve Year 11 or 12 against 19% of males, and a similar difference is observable for mainlanders (table 5.1).

5.1 HIGHEST YEAR OF SCHOOL COMPLETED(a) .....

|                       | YEAR..... |    |                 | Total   |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|-----------------|---------|
|                       | 11-12     | 10 | Less than 10(b) |         |
|                       | %         | %  | %               |         |
| .....                 |           |    |                 |         |
| Strait Islanders      |           |    |                 |         |
| Male                  | 19        | 28 | 53              | 1 900   |
| Female                | 29        | 20 | 51              | 2 100   |
| Persons               | 24        | 24 | 52              | 4 000   |
| Mainland Islanders    |           |    |                 |         |
| Male                  | 23        | 22 | 55              | 2 200   |
| Female                | 34        | 26 | 40              | 2 900   |
| Persons               | 29        | 25 | 46              | 5 100   |
| Australian Indigenous |           |    |                 |         |
| Male                  | 17        | 28 | 55              | 85 200  |
| Female                | 20        | 27 | 53              | 86 400  |
| Persons               | 18        | 28 | 54              | 171 600 |
| .....                 |           |    |                 |         |

(a) Persons who have left school.

(b) Includes never went to school and not stated.

The proportion of Islanders in the Strait with a post-school qualification is lower than among the national Indigenous population, while that for Islanders on the mainland is generally higher than the national figure (table 5.2). Similar to the situation already noted with respect to secondary education, Islander females on the mainland are more highly qualified than males on the mainland (26% versus 15%).

In summary, compared to the national Indigenous average, Islanders appear to achieve higher levels of formal education and to be better qualified. This is particularly the case for Islanders on the mainland. The higher levels of education and qualifications amongst Islanders on the mainland may be an issue of access, attributable to the environment and the level of services there. For instance, there are better and more educational facilities in the mainland urban centres, where many Islanders live, than there are in the Strait (Arthur & Taylor 1994).

Although job opportunities in the mainstream labour market are limited in the Strait, many Islanders, can and do, obtain work in the CDEP scheme. They can also subsidise their incomes with commercial fishing and through subsistence activities (Altman et al. 1994; Arthur 1994; Johannes & MacFarlane 1991; see also chapter 6). These activities do not demand high levels of formal education or qualification. However, on the mainland, there are fewer opportunities of this type and Islanders must be more educated and qualified if they are to compete in the mainstream labour market. The apparently higher levels of education and qualification suggested by the above data, may well reflect an adaptation to the mainland environment.

## 5.2 POST-SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS(a)

|                              | %  | no.    |
|------------------------------|----|--------|
| <b>Strait Islanders</b>      |    |        |
| Male                         | 10 | 200    |
| Female                       | 10 | 200    |
| Persons                      | 10 | 400    |
| <b>Mainland Islanders</b>    |    |        |
| Male                         | 15 | 400    |
| Female                       | 26 | 800    |
| Persons                      | 21 | 1 200  |
| <b>Australian Indigenous</b> |    |        |
| Male                         | 18 | 15 420 |
| Female                       | 16 | 13 460 |
| Persons                      | 17 | 28 880 |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over who have left school.

The proportion of Islanders on the mainland who want to study further is similar to the national Indigenous population (49% versus 46%) (table 5.3). However, a smaller proportion of Islanders in the Strait want further study (30%).

The level of difficulty people experience in taking up further study varies between the three populations (table 5.3). A high proportion of Islanders in the Strait experience some difficulty in taking up further study (86%) while a smaller proportion on the mainland have difficulties (49%).

The type of difficulty people experience also varies (table 5.3). The main problems encountered by Islanders in the Strait are financial (34%) and a lack of courses (30%). Whereas on the mainland, Islanders tend to lack the time and the necessary qualifications for study or they have difficulty getting child-care services (12%), a problem also encountered amongst the national Indigenous population (11%).

These data reflect the differences between the conditions in the Strait and on the mainland which have been alluded to above. For example, the data for the Strait reflect the lower level of educational facilities there (Arthur & Taylor 1994). On the other hand, the problem of obtaining child-care noted by Islanders on the mainland, who are mainly urbanites, is a common one among Indigenous people living in urban situations (Allen 1996, p. 13; Runciman 1994, p. 35).



### 5.3 WANTS TO DO FURTHER STUDY(a)

| <i>Main difficulty</i> | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| .....                  |                             |                               |                                  |
| PROPORTION (%)         |                             |                               |                                  |
| Wants to do more study | 30                          | 49                            | 46                               |
| Difficulties to study  |                             |                               |                                  |
| No difficulty          | 14                          | 51                            | 30                               |
| Financial difficulty   | 34                          | *8                            | 13                               |
| No course available    | 30                          | *5                            | 8                                |
| Child-care             | *2                          | *12                           | 11                               |
| Other(b)               | 20                          | 24                            | 38                               |
| <i>Total</i>           | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| .....                  |                             |                               |                                  |
| NUMBER                 |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons                | 1 200                       | 2 500                         | 78 400                           |
| .....                  |                             |                               |                                  |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over who have left school.

(b) Includes: transport; family and work obligations; lack of English, time or prerequisites; not stated.

A high proportion of people feel welcome at their children's school (table 5.4). The figure is particularly high amongst mainland Islanders (94%) and given that they live in urban situations where they are the numerical and cultural minority, this figure suggests a high degree of integration.

Mainland Islanders are involved in decision-making at schools to approximately the same degree as the national Indigenous population (table 5.4). However, Islanders in the Strait are considerably more involved in school decision-making (63%). It is likely that these data reflect the fact that many Islanders in the Strait live in small close-knit island communities each with its own school (Arthur 1990). These schools often have Islander teachers or teaching assistants and the curriculum usually includes elements of 'island custom'. Further, the schools are often associated with sporting and cultural festivals.

## 5.4 PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOLING, By Those with Children at School

| <i>Perceptions</i>   | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| .....  |                             |                               |                                  |
| PROPORTION (%)   |                             |                               |                                  |
| Whether feels welcome at school  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Feels welcome  | 89                          | 94                            | 84                               |
| Don't know, does not feel welcome, sometimes feels<br>welcome, does not go to the school | 11                          | **6                           | 16                               |
| <i>Total</i>   | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Whether involved in decision making at school  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Involved   | 63                          | 34                            | 39                               |
| Not involved   | 37                          | 66                            | 61                               |
| <i>Total</i>   | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| .....  |                             |                               |                                  |
| NUMBER   |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons  | 1 700                       | 1 600                         | 60 800                           |
| .....  |                             |                               |                                  |

Table 6.1 shows that the labour force status of Islanders in the Strait and on the mainland is similar to that of all Indigenous people in Australia (ABS 1996, p. 13). There are however, differences in the labour force status of Islander males and females. In both the Strait and on the mainland, Islander males are more likely to be employed and to be participating in the labour force than are females (table 6.1 and 6.2). The differences between the employment to population ratio of Islander males and females is less pronounced on the mainland, than in the Strait.

### 6.1 LABOUR FORCE STATUS(a)

|                       | <i>Employment<br/>to population<br/>ratio</i> | <i>Unemploy-<br/>ment<br/>rate</i> | <i>Participation<br/>rate</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|-----------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
|                       | %   | %                                  | %                             | no.          |
| .....                 |   |                                    |                               |              |
| Strait Islanders      |   |                                    |                               |              |
| Male                  | 50  | 37                                 | 79                            | 2 000        |
| Female                | 22  | 35                                 | 34                            | 2 100        |
| Persons               | 36  | 36                                 | 56                            | 4 100        |
| Mainland Islanders    |   |                                    |                               |              |
| Male                  | 48  | 36                                 | 75                            | 2 600        |
| Female                | 32  | 30                                 | 45                            | 3 100        |
| Persons               | 39  | 34                                 | 59                            | 5 700        |
| Australian Indigenous |   |                                    |                               |              |
| Male                  | 45  | 38                                 | 72                            | 88 500       |
| Female                | 27  | 39                                 | 44                            | 92 900       |
| Persons               | 36  | 38                                 | 58                            | 181 400      |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over.

As with the national Indigenous population, Islanders are more likely to be in non-CDEP than CDEP employment (table 6.2) (ABS 1996, p. 26). On the other hand, Islanders in the Strait are proportionately more involved with the CDEP scheme (table 6.2) reflecting, in part, the prevalence of the CDEP scheme in the Strait (Arthur 1991a, 1994). The prevalence and importance of the scheme in the Strait can be gauged by noting that 15% of Islander incomes in the Strait are derived from the CDEP scheme compared to 9% on the mainland (table 6.9). Islander males are more likely to be employed in the CDEP scheme than females which also mirrors the situation within the national Indigenous population (table 6.2) (ABS 1996, p. 26).

However, the CDEP scheme data must be used with a degree of caution. Table 6.2 indicates that Islanders on the mainland participate in the CDEP scheme slightly more than the national Indigenous population (11% versus 9%). And, that they (mainland Islanders) participate in the scheme only slightly less than Islanders in the Strait (11% versus 15%). These data do not fully accord with what is known of participation in the scheme from other sources. These show that the CDEP scheme is extremely common in the Strait, but, that it is not common in the urban mainland centres where Islanders tend to reside (Arthur & Taylor 1994; Arthur 1991a, 1994; Davis 1995). Thus, from what is

known of the situation, one would expect CDEP participation to be very high in the Strait and very low on the mainland. The probable explanation for this anomaly is that CDEP schemes are highly clustered in certain communities. Estimates of CDEP employment are therefore subject to a lack of precision in the sampling process. For example, in the Strait the scheme is concentrated in certain island communities where just over half of the Islanders live. It is possible therefore that, by chance, the sampling process was unrepresentative of the CDEP scheme on the mainland and in the Strait and this has biased the survey results.

## 6.2 CDEP/NON-CDEP EMPLOYMENT(a)

### LABOUR FORCE STATUS.....

|                              | <i>Employed<br/>non-CDEP</i> | <i>Employed<br/>CDEP</i> | <i>Un-<br/>employed</i> | <i>Not in<br/>labour<br/>force</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------|
|                              | %                            | %                        | %                       | %                                  | no.          |
| .....                        |                              |                          |                         |                                    |              |
| <b>Strait Islanders</b>      |                              |                          |                         |                                    |              |
| Male                         | 27                           | 23                       | 29                      | 21                                 | 2 000        |
| Female                       | 15                           | 7                        | 12                      | 66                                 | 2 100        |
| Persons                      | 21                           | 15                       | 20                      | 44                                 | 4 100        |
| <b>Mainland Islanders</b>    |                              |                          |                         |                                    |              |
| Male                         | 32                           | 16                       | 27                      | 25                                 | 2 600        |
| Female                       | 24                           | 7                        | 14                      | 55                                 | 3 100        |
| Persons                      | 28                           | 11                       | 20                      | 41                                 | 5 700        |
| <b>Australian Indigenous</b> |                              |                          |                         |                                    |              |
| Male                         | 32                           | 13                       | 27                      | 28                                 | 88 500       |
| Female                       | 22                           | 5                        | 17                      | 56                                 | 92 900       |
| Persons                      | 27                           | 9                        | 22                      | 42                                 | 181 400      |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over.

The relationship between proficiency in English and employment, suggested by the data, is closest on the mainland where 91% of employed Islanders considered themselves proficient in English, compared to 73% in the Strait (table 6.3). Put differently, the data suggest that English may influence access to the labour market more on the mainland than in the Strait (see also chapter 3).

### 6.3 EMPLOYED AND DIFFICULTY WITH ENGLISH(a)

| Difficulty with English    | Strait    | Mainland  | Australian |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
|                            | Islanders | Islanders | Indigenous |
| .....                      |           |           |            |
| PROPORTION (%)             |           |           |            |
| No difficulty with English | 73        | 91        | 89         |
| Difficulty with English    | 27        | *9        | 10         |
| Not stated                 | —         | —         | 1          |
| Total                      | 100       | 100       | 100        |
| .....                      |           |           |            |
| NUMBER                     |           |           |            |
| Employed persons           | 1 500     | 2 200     | 66 500     |
| .....                      |           |           |            |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over and who are employed.

As noted elsewhere (ABS 1996, p. 71), English appears to influence access to the mainstream labour market more than to the CDEP labour market. Islanders in the Strait who have difficulty with the English language are more likely to be employed in the CDEP scheme than mainlanders (table 6.4). Thus it appears to be harder to access the mainstream labour market with poor English than it is to access the CDEP labour market (ABS 1996, p. 71).

### 6.4 EMPLOYMENT TYPE AND DIFFICULTY WITH ENGLISH(a)

| Difficulty with English    | STRAIT ISLANDERS |      | MAINLAND ISLANDERS |      | AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS |        |
|----------------------------|------------------|------|--------------------|------|-----------------------|--------|
|                            | Non-CDEP         |      | Non-CDEP           |      | Non-CDEP              |        |
|                            | CDEP             | CDEP | CDEP               | CDEP | CDEP                  | CDEP   |
| .....                      |                  |      |                    |      |                       |        |
| PROPORTION (%)             |                  |      |                    |      |                       |        |
| No difficulty with English | 91               | 49   | 93                 | 87   | 92                    | 81     |
| Difficulty with English    | *9               | 51   | *7                 | *13  | 7                     | 19     |
| Not stated                 | **—              | **—  | **—                | **—  | 1                     | **—    |
| Total                      | 100              | 100  | 100                | 100  | 100                   | 100    |
| .....                      |                  |      |                    |      |                       |        |
| NUMBER                     |                  |      |                    |      |                       |        |
| Persons                    | 800              | 600  | 1 600              | 600  | 48 400                | 17 000 |
| .....                      |                  |      |                    |      |                       |        |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over and who are employed.

In general, the pattern of full and part-time employment for Islanders on the mainland is similar to that for the national Indigenous population (table 6.5). However, the pattern is different in the Strait, where part-time employment is more the norm. This again reflects the influence of the CDEP scheme in the Strait as those in the scheme are usually required to work for only part of the week (Arthur 1991a).

## 6.5 FULL OR PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT(a)

## LABOUR FORCE STATUS.....

|                       | <i>Employed<br/>full-time</i> | <i>Employed<br/>part-time</i> | <i>Not stated</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
|                       | %                             | %                             | %                 | no.          |
| .....                 |                               |                               |                   |              |
| Strait Islanders      |                               |                               |                   |              |
| Male                  | 41                            | 56                            | *3                | 1 000        |
| Female                | 50                            | 50                            | **—               | 500          |
| Persons               | 44                            | 54                            | *2                | 1 500        |
| Mainland Islanders    |                               |                               |                   |              |
| Male                  | 70                            | 30                            | **—               | 1 200        |
| Female                | 36                            | 65                            | **—               | 1 000        |
| Persons               | 55                            | 45                            | **—               | 2 200        |
| Australian Indigenous |                               |                               |                   |              |
| Male                  | 67                            | 31                            | 2                 | 39 900       |
| Female                | 45                            | 54                            | 1                 | 25 200       |
| Persons               | 58                            | 40                            | 2                 | 65 100       |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over and who are employed.

## 6.6 UNDERTAKING VOLUNTARY WORK(a)(b)

| <i>Voluntary work(b)</i>                            | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |
| PROPORTION (%)                                      |                             |                               |                                  |
| Hunting, fishing or gathering bush food             | 61                          | 50                            | 39                               |
| Community or sporting organisation                  | 40                          | 28                            | 33                               |
| Committees  | 30                          | 21                            | 30                               |
| School or youth groups                              | 16                          | 25                            | 21                               |
| Caring for sick or aged                             | 4                           | 7                             | 15                               |
| Other   | 2                           | 1                             | 7                                |
| Proportion of all 15+ doing voluntary work          | 41                          | 30                            | 27                               |
| Proportion of all 15+ hunting, fishing or gathering | 24                          | 14                            | 11                               |
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |
| NUMBER  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons   | 1 700                       | 1 700                         | 49 500                           |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over undertaking voluntary work.

(b) People may give more than one answer.

The proportion of Islanders on the mainland doing voluntary work is similar to that in the national Indigenous population (30% and 27%); the pattern of hunting, gathering and fishing is also similar (14% and 11%) (table 6.6). However, levels of voluntary work, and in particular hunting, gathering and fishing, are higher amongst Islanders in the Strait (41%). This doubtless is an indication of the availability of, and access to, marine resources and garden produce in the Strait where these have been estimated to represent 10% of all Islander incomes (Arthur 1991b).

As shown in table 6.7, the issue of extended unemployment is the same for Islanders in the Strait as for the national Indigenous population. Islanders on the mainland meanwhile appear to be unemployed for shorter periods. Again, this suggests that Islanders on the mainland are comparatively successful at accessing the labour market there. And, to a degree, this is reflected in the kind of difficulties mainlanders say they experience in finding a job. For example, only 20% of Islanders on the mainland state that there are no jobs available at all, or in their line of work, compared to 89% of those in the Strait (table 6.8). On the other hand, these data may also reflect the reality that there are fewer job opportunities in the Strait than on the mainland (Arthur & Taylor 1994).

### 6.7 LENGTH OF UNEMPLOYMENT(a)

| Period               | Strait<br>Islanders | Mainland<br>Islanders | Australian<br>Indigenous |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)       |                     |                       |                          |
| Less than six months | 34                  | 45                    | 36                       |
| Six months or more   | 66                  | 52                    | 64                       |
| Total                | 100                 | 100                   | 100                      |
| NUMBER               |                     |                       |                          |
| Persons              | 800                 | 1 100                 | 40 200                   |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over who are unemployed.

Islanders on the mainland obtain their income from the same sources as the Indigenous population (table 6.9). But, Islanders in the Strait receive a comparatively higher proportion of their income from the CDEP scheme (15%) which as noted above can be attributed to the prevalence of the scheme there. Research has noted that Islanders and other Indigenous Australians may obtain income indirectly through subsistence activities (Altman 1987; Arthur 1990) this source of income is not included in the NATSIS nor in table 6.9.

Despite the subtle variations in the labour force data noted above, the median incomes for Islanders in the Strait, on the mainland and for the national Indigenous population are almost identical (table 6.10). These are also broadly similar to median incomes calculated from the 1991 Census (Arthur & Taylor 1994). However, in the 1991 Census, the median incomes for Islanders on the mainland was slightly higher than in the Strait (\$11,244 versus \$10,137) while in NATSIS this was reversed (\$10,032 on the mainland versus \$10,194 in the Strait). These income differences are too small to be significant, but it should be noted that Islanders in the Strait can obtain income from part-time commercial fishing and from subsistence activities (Johannes & MacFarlane 1991; Arthur 1990; Altman et al. 1994) and this income may not always be officially recorded or computed. Thus the real incomes of Islanders in the Strait may be slightly higher than those shown in table 6.10.

**6.8 MAIN DIFFICULTY IN FINDING A JOB(a)**

| <i>Main difficulty</i>             | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)                     |                             |                               |                                  |
| No jobs at all                     | 43                          | *9                            | 21                               |
| No jobs in local area/line of work | 46                          | *11                           | 18                               |
| Others/not stated(b)               | *11                         | 80                            | 61                               |
| <i>Total</i>                       | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| NUMBER                             |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons                            | 800                         | 1 100                         | 40 200                           |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over who are looking for work.

(b) Includes transport, insufficient education, ill health, racial discrimination, and child-care.

**6.9 MAIN SOURCES OF INCOME(a)**

| <i>Main source of income</i> | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)               |                             |                               |                                  |
| Non-CDEP employment          | 20                          | 23                            | 24                               |
| CDEP employment              | 15                          | 9                             | 8                                |
| Government payments          | 52                          | 50                            | 55                               |
| No income                    | 12                          | 14                            | 11                               |
| Not stated                   | *1                          | 4                             | 2                                |
| <i>Total</i>                 | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| NUMBER                       |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons                      | 4 100                       | 5 700                         | 181 500                          |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over.

**6.10 MEDIAN INCOME(a)**

|                      | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PER ANNUM INCOME(\$) |                             |                               |                                  |
| Median income        | 10 194                      | 10 032                        | 10 066                           |
| NUMBER               |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons              | 4 100                       | 5 700                         | 181 500                          |

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over.



The following data suggest that Islanders have less contact with the police, crime and the legal system than does the national indigenous population. This is even more the case in the Strait where contact with the police and legal system appears extremely low (table 7.1). Conversely, Islanders on the mainland are rather more likely to have contact with the police and the legal system than are those in the Strait.

7.1 CONTACT WITH POLICE AND WHETHER ATTACKED OR THREATENED(a)  
.....

| <i>Relationship with police</i>   | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |
| PROPORTION (%)  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Whether arrested in last five years                                     |                             |                               |                                  |
| Arrested  | *2                          | 16                            | 20                               |
| Not arrested  | 96                          | 81                            | 80                               |
| Not applicable or stated  | **2                         | **3                           | —                                |
| Total   | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Whether hassled by police in last 12 months                             |                             |                               |                                  |
| Hassled   | *1                          | *6                            | 10                               |
| Not hassled   | 97                          | 92                            | 89                               |
| Not stated  | *2                          | **2                           | 1                                |
| Total   | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Whether verbally threatened or physically<br>attacked in last 12 months |                             |                               |                                  |
| Was attacked or verbally threatened                                     | 3                           | 12                            | 13                               |
| Was not attacked or verbally threatened                                 | 95                          | 86                            | 87                               |
| Not stated  | *2                          | **2                           | —                                |
| Total   | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Whether needed legal service in last 12 months                          |                             |                               |                                  |
| Needed  | 4                           | 11                            | 17                               |
| Did not need  | 95                          | 87                            | 83                               |
| Not applicable or stated  | **1                         | **2                           | —                                |
| Total   | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| Had access to Indigenous police officers                                | 77                          | 60                            | 46                               |
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |
| NUMBER  |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons   | 4 300                       | 5 900                         | 197 500                          |
| .....   |                             |                               |                                  |

(a) Persons aged 13 years and over.

For instance, a higher proportion of mainlanders than Islanders in the Strait were arrested (16% versus 2%); attacked or verbally threatened (12% versus 3%); or needed the legal service (11% versus 4%). These statistics possibly reflect the fact that many mainlanders live in urban centres and may therefore be subject to greater stresses than those who live in the small and more close-knit Islander communities of the Strait. Also, Islanders in the Strait have greater access to Indigenous police than do mainlanders (77% versus 60%).

Generally, the data suggest that, while some people feel that police relations are improving, this improvement is less marked on the mainland than in the Strait

(table 7.2). In particular, 26% of Islanders on the mainland feel that relations with the police have got worse in the last five years, compared to 12% in the Strait. Again, these figures may reflect the difference in social environments and in access to Indigenous police noted above. It is also noticeable that the proportion of Islanders on the mainland who feel that police relations have worsened is higher than in the national Indigenous population (26% versus 19%).

Combining several of the above results we can suggest that Islanders on the mainland have greater contact with the legal system and the police than do those in the Strait and that they are less likely to consider that their relations with the police are improving. These differences may be explained by the different social environments in the Strait and on the mainland, and also by the higher level of access to Indigenous policing found in the Strait.

### 7.2 PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGE IN POLICE RELATIONS(a)

| <i>Change in the last five years</i> | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| .....                                |                             |                               |                                  |
| PROPORTION (%)                       |                             |                               |                                  |
| Better                               | 22                          | 20                            | 21                               |
| Worse                                | 12                          | 26                            | 19                               |
| Unchanged                            | 18                          | 28                            | 39                               |
| Don't know or not stated             | 48                          | 26                            | 21                               |
| <i>Total</i>                         | 100                         | 100                           | 100                              |
| .....                                |                             |                               |                                  |
| NUMBER                               |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons                              | 4 300                       | 5 900                         | 197 500                          |
| .....                                |                             |                               |                                  |

(a) Persons aged 13 years and over.

In interpreting the survey results on voter participation, it must be remembered that in Queensland voting is compulsory in all but the ATSIC and TSRA elections. In addition (in the context of this publication), while Islanders on the mainland vote for one of the seven ATSIC Regional Councils on the Queensland mainland, those in the Strait cast their vote for the TSRA.

Islanders on the mainland participate in elections at approximately the same level as the national Indigenous population (table 7.3). In the case of their relationship with ATSIC, it is reported that Islanders on the mainland often feel marginalised when compared to Aboriginal people and less able to access the programs and services provided by ATSIC (ATSIC 1996). However, the data show that they vote in the ATSIC elections at the same level as the national Indigenous population (39%) suggesting that Islanders on the mainland are no less involved in the representative aspects of the ATSIC system.

Voter participation in the Strait appears particularly high at all levels of government, which may reflect the political profile and position enjoyed by the region. The Strait is the region from which the country's Native Title legislation was derived in 1993, it is the only part of the nation located on an international border, namely that with Papua New Guinea (Arthur 1992b).

7.3 WHETHER VOTED IN LAST ELECTIONS(a)

| <i>Elections(b)</i> | <i>Strait<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Mainland<br/>Islanders</i> | <i>Australian<br/>Indigenous</i> |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROPORTION (%)      |                             |                               |                                  |
| Federal             | 82                          | 62                            | 66                               |
| State               | 82                          | 66                            | 62                               |
| Local government    | 86                          | 62                            | 50                               |
| TSRA/ATSIC          | 47                          | 39                            | 39                               |
| None of the above   | 9                           | 26                            | 26                               |
| Not stated          | *1                          | *2                            | 1                                |
| NUMBER              |                             |                               |                                  |
| Persons             | 3 900                       | 5 000                         | 163 800                          |

(a) Persons aged 18 years and over.

(b) People will have voted in more than one election.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES .....

### SURVEY DESIGN

**1** The estimates contained in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample of approximately 5,000 dwellings throughout Australia which comprised about 6.6% (17,500 persons) of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, as reported in the 1991 Census of Population and Housing. Households were selected at random using a multistage sample design stratified by census Collector Districts within each of the 35 ATSI Regions and the Torres Strait Area. This design ensured the sample was nationally representative of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in different circumstances across the country.

### DATA CONTENT

**2** The survey content covers both attitudinal and factual data which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives and the ABS, through a widespread consultation process, worked out to be the most important information to collect in the survey. An important outcome of the consultation process is that the information collected in the survey and the methods used to collect it took account of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural values and priorities.

### INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

**3** Every care was taken to ensure that the results of this survey are as accurate as possible. There remain, however, factors which may affect the accuracy of the results to some extent and for which no specific adjustments can be made. For instance, the estimates are based on a sample, and so they are subject to sampling variability. The standard error is used as the measure of variability that occurs because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. For further information about sampling variability, readers should refer to the Technical Notes on Sample Design and Variability in *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Detailed Findings* (4190.0).

**4** Inaccuracies may also arise from errors in responses. These are referred to as non-sampling errors, and may occur in any enumeration whether it be a full count or a sample. Responses may be affected by imperfect recall or different understandings of some questions while other responses may reflect short-term views due to some recent event rather than the person's usual feelings or circumstances.

### ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

**5** The following abbreviations and symbols have been used in this publication:

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| ABS   | Australian Bureau of Statistics   |
| ATSI  | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission  |
| CAEPR | Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research  |
| CDEP  | Community Development Employment Projects   |
| NATSI | National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey   |
| OTSI  | Office of Torres Strait Islander Affairs  |
| TSRA  | Torres Strait Regional Authority  |
| *     | Relative standard error between 25% and 50%   |
| **    | Relative standard error of 50% or more. Estimates marked with asterisks should be interpreted with caution. |
| —     | nil or rounded to zero.   |

## TECHNICAL NOTE .....

### INTRODUCTION

As explained below, this publication is limited to a description of Torres Strait Islanders in Queensland. Estimating the size of the Torres Strait Islander population in Australia is a difficult task, partly because the population is small and partly because it is highly clustered on the eastern seaboard. Selecting a representative sample from this population in the NATSIS was difficult for the same reason.

### 1991 CENSUS

The number of Torres Strait Islanders counted in the 1991 Census throughout Australia was 26,884 (table T.1). This count is somewhat lower than a population estimate would be for this section of the Australian population. Population estimates at the time of counting in censuses are derived by adjusting the census counts for what is considered to be the most probable degree of underenumeration. Partly because of the volatility of population counts of the Torres Strait Islanders from one census to another, the ABS does not attempt to estimate the underenumeration in this population group on its own. Consequently, no population estimate for Torres Strait Islanders can be made from the 1991 Census.

The Torres Strait Islander count for the 1991 Census was derived from the second box of the following question.

Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

(Mark only one box)

Yes, Aboriginal

Yes, Torres Strait Islander

No

The number of people recorded as Torres Strait Islander in each State and Territory were:

#### T.1 TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POPULATION—1991 CENSUS

| State/Territory              | Number        |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| New South Wales              | 4 886         |
| Victoria                     | 2 996         |
| Queensland                   | 14 650        |
| South Australia              | 1 592         |
| Western Australia            | 776           |
| Tasmania                     | 1 264         |
| Northen Territory            | 625           |
| Australian Capital Territory | 95            |
| <b>Australia</b>             | <b>26 884</b> |

Besides showing the expected pre-eminence of Queensland as the place of residence of Torres Strait Islanders, the Census also showed a surprisingly large number of people of

Torres Strait Islander origin in Tasmania. Various explanations have been offered for this probable anomaly (Arthur 1992b; Evans et al. 1993). Most likely amongst these is that some Indigenous people from the Bass Strait Islands, or 'Straitsmen' or 'Islanders' as they sometimes refer to themselves, have nominated themselves as Torres Strait Islanders—either inadvertently or possibly to distinguish themselves from the Aboriginal people of the mainland. Whatever the reason, there is doubt about the veracity of the number of Torres Strait Islanders recorded in Tasmania.

1994 NATSIS

The NATSIS used a two-stage approach to select the sample of indigenous respondents to be surveyed (see *1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey, Detailed Findings* (4190.0)). The first phase of this process consisted of permanent ABS survey field officers 'door-knocking' selected districts throughout Australia to identify where Indigenous people lived. The second stage consisted of specially employed Indigenous interviewers returning to the identified homes at arranged times to interview the households' residents and visitors.

Using data from the 1991 Census it is possible to determine the number of Torres Strait Islanders one would expect to find in the NATSIS sample areas. These figures are in table T.2. The numbers of people who nominated that they were Torres Strait Islanders at the first phase of the selection, and the number who subsequently were interviewed are also shown in table T.2.

**T.2 TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PARTICIPATION IN THE NATSIS**

| NATSIS 1994 .....  |   |  |                           |
|--------------------|---|--|---------------------------|
| State/Territory    | <i>Expected sample from<br/>1991 Census</i> | <i>Identified sample<br/>from search</i> | <i>Number interviewed</i> |
| New South Wales    | 86  | 49                                       | 12                        |
| Victoria           | 103   | 30                                       | 10                        |
| Queensland         | 908   | 965                                      | 1 047                     |
| South Australia    | 55  | 13                                       | 6                         |
| Western Australia  | 45  | 23                                       | 36                        |
| Tasmania           | 201   | 85                                       | 64                        |
| Northern Territory | 32  | 21                                       | 27                        |
| <b>Australia</b>   | <b>1 430</b>                                | <b>1 186</b>                             | <b>1 204</b>              |

Table T.2 indicates significant discrepancies in some States, between the numbers of Torres Strait Islanders that might have been expected in 1994, given the three years of natural growth since 1991. Except for Queensland, where numbers are slightly higher in the search and interview phases of the NATSIS than might be expected from census information, in all other States these are substantially lower. It should be noted that the discrepancy is greatest in the south-eastern States. The discrepancies in the data from the south-eastern States may be connected with the Bass Strait/Torres Strait Islander issue referred to above. Another explanation for the discrepancies could be that NATSIS respondents of Torres Strait Islander origin may not always be identified correctly by either the ABS field officers or the Indigenous interviewers, or alternatively, respondents may not wish to identify as Torres Strait Islanders. Another possible explanation might be that the Census is self-completed, possibly leading to a small number of people

'spoiling' Census returns by wrongly identifying themselves as Torres Strait Islanders. Such 'spoiled' returns, which would have less impact in Queensland because of its larger Torres Strait Islander population, would be less likely in the NATSIS because all returns are completed by interviewers.

There was a slight change in the way in which Torres Strait Islander people were identified in the NATSIS compared with the 1991 Census and this also might have influenced the results.

The NATSIS Indigenous identifier question was:

Are you of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin?

(For persons of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, mark both 'yes')

- |                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes, Aboriginal             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, Torres Strait Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Thus, people who were of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin were encouraged to nominate both groups. However, this methodology would be expected to result in NATSIS locating a larger number of Torres Strait Islanders than the 1991 Census. Whereas, as already explained, NATSIS located fewer Torres Strait Islanders.

This problem will be investigated further prior to any future National Survey with the intention of improving the Torres Strait Islander sample. However, one outcome of the problem is that at this stage it is not possible to release separate statistical results from the 1994 NATSIS for Torres Strait Islanders for any State or Territory other than Queensland, and this has, to a large extent, determined the structure of this publication.

## GLOSSARY .....

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Aboriginal</b>                                      | A person who identifies himself or herself to be of Aboriginal origin. In ABS collections this is ascertained by the asking of the question 'Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?' Persons who answered yes then were asked to indicate whether they were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. In the NATSIS, persons aged 13 years and over were asked directly, whereas persons aged 12 years and under were identified by a responsible adult in the household, usually a parent. |
| <b>Aboriginal Legal Service</b>                        | Established to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with legal matters.  |
| <b>Actions taken</b>                                   | Refers to specific actions persons took with regard to their health in the two weeks prior to interview.  |
| <b>Arrested</b>  | Where a person has been arrested and taken into custody/remand by the police.   |
| <b>ATSIC Regions</b>                                   | Defined geographic areas, each represented by an ATSIC Regional Council.  |
| <b>Attacked</b>  | Where a person has suffered physical force from another person(s), for example, by being pushed, hit, kicked or speared.  |
| <b>Certificate</b>                                     | See Year 10 certificate and Year 12 certificate.  |
| <b>Clan, tribal or language group</b>                  | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups within Australia.  |
| <b>Community Development Employment Project (CDEP)</b> | The Projects which operate through grants from ATSIC to Indigenous community organisations to enable individuals to undertake community managed activities in return for wages.   |
| <b>Cultural activities</b>                             | Includes funerals, ceremonies, Indigenous festivals and carnivals and involvement with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisations.  |
| <b>Dependent children</b>                              | Any children in a family less than 15 years of age or aged 15 to 24 years who are full-time students, and not themselves part of a couple relationship or a parent.   |
| <b>Educational qualification</b>                       | An award for successful completion of a course of post-school study at a recognised institution, such as TAFE or university, e.g., trade certificate, diploma, degree.  |
| <b>Employed persons</b>                                | Persons aged 15 years and over who in the week prior to the interview worked for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind in a job or business, or on a farm (comprising employees, employers and self-employed persons).   |
| <b>Employment/population ratio</b>                     | The employment/population ratio for any group is the number of employed persons expressed as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 and over in the same group.  |
| <b>Government payment</b>                              | Includes Newstart allowance, Jobsearch, age pension, sickness allowance, disability support pension, sole parent pension, family payments, rent assistance, ABSTUDY and other government payments.  |



|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Hassled</b>                        | Includes being harassed, picked on, bullied, caused worry or embarrassment.   |
| <b>Health risk factors</b>            | Factors which increase the risk of ill health. Risk factors covered in the survey included: alcohol and tobacco use; relative weight; diet; breastfeeding; and physical and verbal attacks and threats.   |
| <b>Homelands</b>                      | An area of land to which Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people have ancestral and/or cultural links.  |
| <b>Household</b>                      | Consists of a person living alone, or two or more related or unrelated persons who live and eat together in private residential accommodation. For the purpose of this survey, one or more members of the household had identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. |
| <b>Income unit</b>                    | An income unit may comprise one person, or a group of related persons, within a household, whose command over income is shared. The relationships allowed for in the definition of income unit is restricted to those of marriage (registered or de facto) and of parent/dependent child.       |
| <b>Indigenous</b>                     | Persons aged 13 years and over who identified themselves to be of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. Persons aged 12 years and under were identified by a responsible adult in the household, usually a parent.   |
| <b>Indigenous language</b>            | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Excludes Aboriginal English and Creoles.   |
| <b>Islander</b>                       | Person of Torres Strait Islander origin.  |
| <b>Labour force</b>                   | Persons aged 15 years and over who were either employed or unemployed.  |
| <b>Labour force status</b>            | A classification of persons 15 years and over into employed, unemployed or not in the labour force.   |
| <b>Language spoken</b>                | A person is considered to be able to speak a language (such as an Aboriginal language) if he or she can hold a conversation in that language. Only people aged five years and over were included.   |
| <b>Last year</b>                      | Refers to the 12 month period prior to interview.   |
| <b>Long-term condition</b>            | Condition which has lasted for six months or more.  |
| <b>Long-term unemployment</b>         | Persons unemployed for a period of 52 weeks or more.  |
| <b>Main language</b>                  | Refers to the language the person is most comfortable with or speaks most fluently.   |
| <b>Mainland Islander</b>              | Person of Torres Strait Islander origin who lives in Queensland, in an ATSI region other than the Torres Strait Area.   |
| <b>Making decisions at the school</b> | Includes involvement in the Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness Program, and Parents and Citizens school meetings where decisions about fund raising and maintenance of the school are made.  |
| <b>Median income</b>                  | The mid-point in the distribution of the income.  |
| <b>NATSIS</b>                         | The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey which was conducted in 1994.  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Not in the labour force</b>                 | Persons aged 15 years and over who were not employed or unemployed as defined.   |
| <b>Participation rate</b>                      | For any group, the labour force expressed as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 and over in the same group. Prisoners are excluded from this calculation.   |
| <b>Perceived health problems</b>               | A respondent's opinion of the main health problems confronting people in his or her local area.  |
| <b>Personal income</b>                         | Refers to the gross income a person received at the time of interview in the form of wages and salaries and government payments. Wages and salaries were reported on a weekly, fortnightly, monthly or annual basis, while government payments were usually reported on a fortnightly basis. The amount was extrapolated to an annual amount.  |
| <b>Private dwelling</b>                        | The premises occupied by a household and includes houses, flats, home units, garages, tents and improvised homes. It excludes hostels, hospitals, prisons and so on.   |
| <b>Relative weight</b>                         | Weight and height measurements taken during interview have been used to derive a person's body mass index. The body mass index equals a person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of his or her height in metres. The categories used are consistent with recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council and are described in 'Factors Which May Affect Health'. |
| <b>Satisfied with dwelling</b>                 | Respondents were asked whether the dwelling satisfied the needs of the people living there.  |
| <b>Strait</b>                                  | Refers to the Torres Strait Islands and communities within the ambit of the Torres Strait Regional Authority.  |
| <b>Strait Islander</b>                         | Person of Torres Strait Islander origin who lives in the region within the ambit of the Torres Strait Regional Authority.  |
| <b>Taken away from natural family</b>          | People who have been removed from their natural family as a child as part of a government policy. 'Family' may include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and siblings and extended family members such as aunts, uncles and grandparents. Excludes people who were removed from their family for less than six months.   |
| <b>Threatened</b>                              | Any verbal abuse to a person where no weapon was seen and no physical violence occurred. It includes verbal threats to harm the respondent or his/her property.  |
| <b>Torres Strait Islander</b>                  | Persons 13 years and over, who identified themselves to be of Torres Strait Islander origin. Persons 12 years and under were identified by a responsible adult in the household, usually a parent. See also Aboriginal and Indigenous.   |
| <b>Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA)</b> | An authority established under the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission Amendment Act 1993</i> to replace the former ATSIC regional council for the Torres Strait ATSIC region.  |
| <b>Unemployed persons</b>                      | Persons aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the week prior to interview, and who had actively looked for work at any time during the last four weeks prior to interview, and who were available to start work in the last week.  |

- Unemployment rate** For any group, the number of unemployed persons expressed as percentage of the labour force (unemployed plus employed) in the same group.
- Voluntary work** Includes any unpaid community work such as caring for sick or aged people, working for community or sporting organisations, working at a school or with youth groups, working on a committee and hunting, fishing or gathering bush food.
- Year 10 certificate** Completion of a Year 10 certificate, Aboriginal Access Course or equivalent.
- Year 12 certificate** Completion of Year 12 certificate, General Certificate of Education or equivalent.

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2417930001942  
ISBN 0 642 23205 9

**RRP \$17.50**

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