

# Department of the North West, State of Western Australia

1 January 1920 – 1 January 1926

## Details

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The Department of the North West was given responsibility in 1920 for Aboriginal people living in the area of Western Australia above latitude 25 degrees south. The Department administered the policies of Chief Protector of Aborigines which included, who was legal guardian of every Aboriginal child as stipulated in the Aborigines Act 1905. In 1926 these responsibilities were transferred to the Aborigines Department (1926-1936).

The Department of the North West was responsible for Aboriginal matters, including the custody, care and protection of Aboriginal children living in areas of Western Australia above 25 degrees latitude, from 1 January 1920. The State Records Office website provides an overview of the Department:

*This department had control of Aboriginal affairs for the area above latitude 25 degrees South in Western Australia. The Department of Fisheries had control of Aboriginal affairs for the area below latitude 25 degrees South in Western Australia. Auber Octavius Neville was appointed Chief Protector of Aborigines on 7 May 1915. He became Secretary for the Department of the North West on 1 November 1920, combining this position with that of Chief Protector (North of the 25th parallel). When the Aborigines Department was re-established in 1926, Neville became once again, on 30 June 1926, the Chief Protector of Aborigines for the whole State.*

On 1 January 1926, the responsibility for matters relating to Aboriginal people was transferred to the second 'version' of the Aborigines Department (1926-1936). The Department of the North West ceased at that time.

## More info

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### Chronology

- Aborigines Protection Board, Crown Colony of Western Australia (January 1887 - 1890)
  - Aborigines Protection Board, Colony of Western Australia (1890 - 1898)
    - Aborigines Department, State of Western Australia (1 April 1898 - 31 December 1908)
    - Department of Aborigines and Fisheries, State of Western Australia (1 January 1909 - 1 January 1920)
- **Department of the North West, State of Western Australia (1 January 1920 – 1 January 1926)**
  - Aborigines Department, State of Western Australia (1926 - 1936)
  - Department of Native Affairs, State of Western Australia (1936 - 1954)
    - Department of Native Welfare, State of Western Australia (1955 - 1972)
    - Department for Community Welfare, State of Western Australia (1972 - 1985)

- Department for Community Services, State of Western Australia (1 January 1985 - 1 October 1992)

## Related Entries

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- [La Grange Bay Feeding Depot \(1918 - 1949\)](#)

### Related Organisations

- [Fisheries Department, State of Western Australia \(1920 - 1964\)](#)  
The Fisheries Department (south of 25th parallel) and Department of the North West (north of 25th parallel) shared control of Aboriginal affairs in WA.  
Date: 1 January 1920 - 1 January 1926
- [Chief Protector of Aborigines \(1898 - 1936\)](#)  
The Chief Protector was Secretary for the Department of the North West.

### Related Legislation

- [Aborigines Act 1905, Western Australia \(1906 - 1964\)](#)  
The Department of the North West administered the *Aborigines Act 1905* in the northern regions of Western Australia.  
Date: 1920 - 1926
- [Aborigines Act Amendment Act 1911, Western Australia \(1911 - 1964\)](#)

### Related Concepts

- [Aboriginal Protection in Western Australia \(c. 1832 - c. 1972\)](#)

## Resources

- [Aboriginal History](#), State Records Office of Western Australia website, 2012

## Records

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### Records

- [Files \(Aboriginal matters\) - Chief Secretary's Department \(1916 - 1927\)](#)
  - [Files \(Aboriginal Matters\) - Department of the North West \[1\] \(1915 - 1949\)](#)
  - [Department of Native Welfare \[and predecessors\], Client Files \(1921 - 1969\)](#)
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