

Adoption of Children Act Amendment Act (No. 2) 1953, Western Australia

1954 – 1995

URL: https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_7177_homepage.html

Details

The Adoption of Children Act Amendment Act (No. 2) 1953 (Act no. 57 1953 (2 Eliz. II No.57) commenced on 9 January 1954). The Act enabled a child born outside Australia but adopted in WA to have their adoption registered here as a new birth entry, just like children who were born and adopted in WA. Amendments in 1945 had made this possible for all children born in Australia or where other governments had 'reciprocal arrangements' with Western Australia. An unfortunate effect of this amendment was that it further closed off information about people's 'origins'. This amendment has been seen as contributing to the 'closed adoption' practices of this era.

Before this 1953 amendment to the Adoption Act, a child who was born outside Australia but adopted in WA could only get a birth certificate from their country of birth. For example, if a child was born in Ireland and adopted in WA they might have an adoption order stating their name was John Doe, Western Australia, and a birth certificate (equally 'legal') stating they were John O'Day, County Cork. After the 1953 amendment, WA became the legal 'place of birth' for all children adopted here regardless where they were born or whether the government of their birthplace had an agreement with the WA government.

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