

# Royal Commission to Investigate, Report and Advise upon Matters in Relation to the Condition and Treatment of Aborigines 1935, State of Western Australia

1934? – 1935

**Other Names:** • Moseley Royal Commission

## Details

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The *Royal Commission to Investigate, Report and Advise upon Matters in Relation to the Condition and Treatment of Aborigines* undertaken by Magistrate H.D. Moseley: 'considered, among other matters, the administration of Indigenous affairs, native settlements, town camps, employment, disease and the trial procedures for Indigenous people...Like Roth, [Moseley] believed that a protection policy was in the best interests of Indigenous people and that [their] treatment by pastoralists and missionaries was satisfactory...the living conditions at the government Moore River native settlement and in the many camps across the state were deplorable...Because he favoured a protection policy rather than reform, Moseley's recommendations, when written into the *Native Administration Act 1936* placed even greater authority in the hands of the Chief Protector, now referred to as Commissioner.' (Green, p.781).

WA historian Neville Green has remarked that royal commissions and inquiries into Indigenous matters in Western Australia have generally been motivated by one of two themes: either to identify problems and improve legislation and/or policy; or to 'address concerns of abuse and injustice'. As outcomes from the Moseley Royal Commission show, problems and injustices can continue after the findings and recommendations have been made even when certain improvements do come about.

Tilbrook, in *Nyungar Tradition* (p.76) reported that the '1905 Aborigines Act strongly encouraged Nyungar families to turn to each other for marriage partners, particularly Section 43 which made residence or cohabitation between an Aboriginal and a non-Aboriginal illegal. The restrictions of this Act relating to marriage were not fully lifted until the Native Welfare Act of 1963 came into effect, although moves in this direction began with the Moseley Royal Commission into Aboriginal Affairs in 1935. See also p.120 for another reference to Moseley.

## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Related Events

- [Royal Commission to Enquire into and Report Upon \[inter alia\] the Administration of the Aborigines Department and the Condition of the Natives, State of Western Australia \(1904? - 1905\)](#)

The Moseley Royal Commission upheld the Roth Report's view that 'Aboriginal protection' was a desirable policy.

Date: 1935 -

### Related Organisations

- [Derby Leprosarium \(c. 1936 - 1986\)](#)

### Related Legislation

- [Aborigines Act Amendment Act 1936, Western Australia \(1936 - 1964\)](#)

Recommendations from the Mosely Royal Commission were implemented in the Native Administration Act 1936.

Date: 1935 -

### Related Concepts

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

The Moseley Royal Commission strengthened the 'protection' role in relation to Aboriginal people in WA.

Date: 1935 -

## Resources

- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), [To Remove and Protect](#), 2014
- [The Aborigines Report](#), Western Mail, 21 March 1935. *Relevance*: The findings of the Moseley Royal Commission (1935) were reported in WA newspapers
- [Steps to Improve Lot of Natives in W.A.](#), The West Australian, 21 June 1949
- McDonald, Ashley, [Are We Family? And if so, Can I Still Sue You?](#), Murdoch University Electronic Journal of Law, March 2000
- Whittington, Vera, *Sister Kate: a life dedicated to children in need of care*, 1999
- Swain, Shurlee, [History of Australian inquiries reviewing institutions providing care for children](#), October 2014

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