

4. Income status

Indigenous people in the Pilbara have a number of potential sources of cash income. These range from wage labour in mining and other mainstream forms of work, to participation in a CDEP scheme, unemployment benefit and other payments from Centrelink, royalty or other agreed payments to traditional land owners, and private income from the sale of art works, crafts and other products. Set against these, of course, there are routine deductions from income at source, such as those for house rent and power charges.

Accurate data on income levels, and employment and non-employment sources of income, are notoriously difficult to obtain due to a variety of conceptual problems. For one thing, most measures of income refer to a period of time, such as annual or weekly income, whereas the flow of income to individuals and households within the region is often intermittent. Census data, for example, are collected for all sources of income in respect of a 'usual week' and then rounded up to annual income. What might constitute 'usual weekly' income in many Indigenous households is difficult to determine. On the credit side, there is the likelihood of intermittent employment and windfall gains from sources such as gambling, cash loans, and royalty payments. This sort of income combines with debits (for example, due to loss of employment and cash transfers to others), to create a highly complex picture even over a short space of time, and one that census methods of data gathering are likely to misrepresent.

Even if adequate questions were asked regarding income, high levels of population mobility would make it difficult to establish a consistent set of income recipients over a period of time. This is further complicated by job mobility with individuals often employed on a casual or part-time basis and moving into and out of longer-term jobs. As for the circulation of cash between individuals and households, information on this is non-existent. Also lacking are data on expenditure, although a common pattern reported from elsewhere is one of cash feast and famine against a background of high costs for essentials such as food and transport (Taylor & Westbury 2000).

The most comprehensive source of income data for the region based on a consistent methodology is the census. It should be noted, however, that census data report income in categories, with the highest category left open-ended. Consequently, actual incomes have to be derived. In estimating total and mean incomes, the mid-point for each income category is used on the assumption that individuals are evenly distributed around this mid-point. The open-ended highest category is problematic, but it is arbitrarily assumed that the average income received by individuals in this category was one-and-a-half times the lower limit of the category (Treadgold 1988). Clearly, estimates of mean incomes will vary according to the upper level adopted.

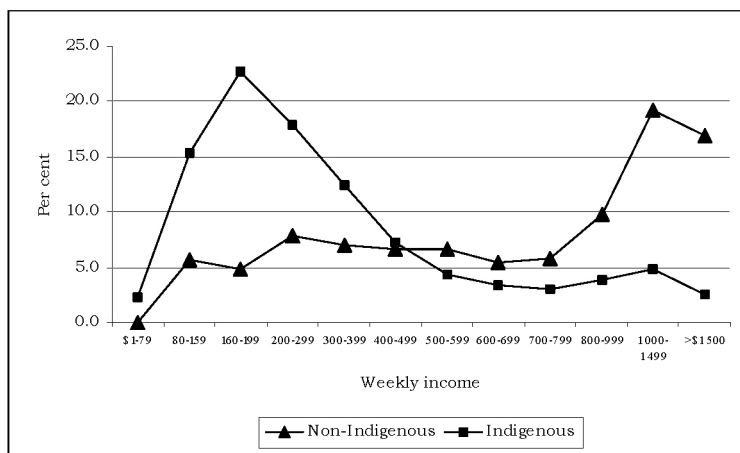
Also, the gross income reported in the census is intended to include family allowances, pensions, unemployment benefits, student allowances, maintenance, superannuation, wages, salary, dividends, rents received, interest received, business or farm income, and worker's compensation received. Whether all such sources are reported is unknown. One distinct advantage of census data, however, is that it provides a means by which an estimate of dependence on income from welfare can be derived. This is done by cross-tabulating data on income with labour force status as a basis for distinguishing employment income from non-employment income, the latter being considered a proxy measure of welfare dependence.

Employment and non-employment income

The relative contribution made to total income from employment as opposed to from other sources is an important factor in terms of the economic situation facing Indigenous people in the Pilbara regional economy. Approximate parity between net incomes derived from social security and those derived from employment (after tax) is likely, unless there is sufficient participation in well-paying jobs. It is argued generally for Indigenous people that the gap between welfare and earned income is sufficiently low as to discourage job seeking (Hunter & Daly 1998). In the Pilbara, given the large and expanding number of relatively high paid positions in the mining industry, this is potentially less of an issue, with the challenge more about ensuring job readiness for the opportunities that are available.

Fig. 4.1 shows the relative personal income distribution for Indigenous and non-Indigenous adults enumerated in the Pilbara in 2001. Enumeration data are used here in order to include in the profile the incomes of temporary workers (mostly non-Indigenous) who are employed in the Pilbara but whose usual residence is elsewhere. Of particular note here are FIFO workers who earn their income in the Pilbara but who invariably spend it elsewhere (see Interview segment 20, p. 74). It is clear that the bulk of Indigenous people have incomes at the lower end of the distribution with a clustering around \$199 per week (\$10 400 per annum) and a steady falling off thereafter. More than three-quarters (78%) of Indigenous incomes are less than \$500 per week (\$25 968 per annum) which is the point at which the two distributions cross over. In contrast, 68 per cent of non-Indigenous incomes are above this level, and the non-Indigenous distribution rises at the higher end with more than one-third of incomes (36%) above \$1000 per week.

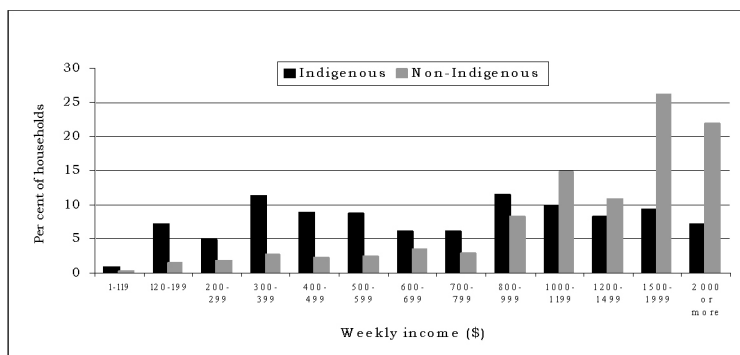
Figure 4.1. Weekly personal income (\$) distribution of Indigenous and non-Indigenous adults in the Pilbara, 2001



Source: ABS 2001 Census customised place of enumeration tables.

Indigenous household incomes also fall substantially behind those of non-Indigenous households (Fig. 4.2) with almost half of all Indigenous household incomes (47%) falling below \$700 per week. By contrast, as much as 86 per cent of all non-Indigenous household incomes fall above this level, with 48 per cent in the top two income brackets over \$1500 per week.

Figure 4.2. Indigenous and non-Indigenous weekly household income: Pilbara SD, 2001



Source: ABS 2002b.

As with many social indicators, the Pilbara average masks considerable diversity. Table 4.1 shows the distribution of Indigenous and non-Indigenous median family and household incomes by IA, together with average household sizes. While the gap in relative incomes is everywhere substantial, this is exacerbated for Indigenous households by their larger household size and need to support a greater number of dependents on smaller incomes (see Interview segment

17, p. 73; Interview segment 18, p. 74; Interview segment 20, p. 74; Interview segment 23, p. 75). The difference is most acute in Port Hedland where Indigenous households have the added burden of competing for housing. Karratha stands out as having by far the highest Indigenous family and household incomes.

Table 4.1. Indigenous and non-Indigenous median family and household weekly incomes by IA: Pilbara SD, 2001

Indigenous Area	Indigenous family income (\$)	Indigenous household income (\$)	Mean Indigenous household size
Roebourne	700–799	700–799	4.2
Roebourne bal	500–599	700–799	3.9
Karratha	1000–1199	1000–1199	3.4
Ashburton	600–699	600–699	3.6
East Pilbara (W)	400–499	800–999	6.8
East Pilbara (E)	400–499	700–799	4.0
Jigalong	400–499	600–699	6.7
Marble Bar	500–599	500–599	3.8
Yandeyarra	500–599	700–799	4.3
Pt. H. (ex urban)	300–399	400–499	4.3
Port Hedland	700–799	600–699	3.4
Indigenous Area	Non-Indigenous family income (\$)	Non-Indigenous household income (\$)	Mean non-Indigenous household size
Roebourne	800–999	600–699	2.2
Roebourne bal	1500–1999	1200–1499	2.9
Karratha	1500–1999	1200–1499	2.9
Ashburton	1500–1999	1500–1999	2.8
East Pilbara (W)	600–699	600–699	2.5
East Pilbara (E)	1500–1999	1200–1499	2.7
Jigalong	n/a	1000–1199	1.6
Marble Bar	800–999	700–799	2.2
Yandeyarra	1500–1999	1000–1199	1.5
Pt. H. (ex urban)	800–999	800–999	2.8
Port Hedland	1500–1999	1200–1499	2.7

Source: ABS 2002b.

Table 4.2 shows these same data converted into annual average personal incomes according to the labour force status of Indigenous and non-Indigenous adults. For ease of comparison, the ratios of Indigenous to non-Indigenous incomes for each of these categories are shown in Table 4.3. Not surprisingly, for Indigenous people, employment in the mainstream labour market returns much higher personal income compared to work in CDEP schemes (see Interview segment 17, p. 73; Interview segment 18, p. 74; Interview segment 19, p. 74). However, Indigenous people in mainstream work still lag far behind their non-Indigenous counterparts, with the average Indigenous income from employment below two-thirds of the non-Indigenous level. Also of note is the fact that Indigenous income from non-employment (welfare) sources is substantially lower than the non-Indigenous equivalent, at least as far as these census-based estimates are concerned. While reasons for this are not clear, it may be that the relatively high

non-Indigenous figures reflect individuals who are temporarily between jobs. Overall, average Indigenous income is less than half (42%) of the average non-Indigenous equivalent.

Table 4.2. Indigenous and non-Indigenous annual average personal income (\$) by labour force status in the Pilbara SD, 2001

	CDEP	Mainstream	Unemployed	Not in labour force	Total
Indigenous	11 041	34 966	11 058	11 811	20 163
Non-Indigenous	n/a	55 226	20 642	14 793	47 624

Source: ABS customised tables.

Table 4.3. Ratios of Indigenous to non-Indigenous annual average personal income (\$) by labour force status in the Pilbara SD, 2001

CDEP	Mainstream	Unemployed	Not in labour force	Total
100.0	0.63	0.53	0.80	0.42

Source: ABS 2001 Census customised place of enumeration tables.

It is interesting to compare these average incomes for different parts of the Pilbara as notable variations occur. For example, Table 4.4 shows average incomes from mainstream employment as well as average incomes from all sources for Indigenous and non-Indigenous adults in the four Pilbara SLAs. This reveals that average Indigenous total incomes are much lower in the East Pilbara than in any other part of the Pilbara, and nowhere do they exceed more than 50 per cent of their non-Indigenous equivalents. Ironically, the highest non-Indigenous incomes are also found in the East Pilbara. This just serves to exacerbate the gap in economic status in this region where Indigenous incomes are only 28 per cent of the non-Indigenous level. By far the highest Indigenous incomes from mainstream employment are found in the Ashburton SLA. Also worth noting is the fact that the lowest incomes overall are found in Port Hedland and Roebourne SLAs reflecting their greater share of lower paying non-mining jobs.

Table 4.4. Indigenous and non-Indigenous average incomes from mainstream employment and all sources: Pilbara SLAs, 2001

SLA	Mainstream employment (\$)		Total (\$)	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
East Pilbara	30 384	62 041	15 833	55 478
Port Hedland	36 316	54 076	22 396	46 828
Ashburton	42 655	60 699	22 259	50 555
Roebourne	33 380	50 862	21 353	43 792
Total Pilbara	34 966	55 226	20 163	47 624

Source: ABS 2001 Census customised place of enumeration tables.

Regional prices index

Part of the difficulty in assessing the adequacy of income lies in establishing its purchasing power. This is a complex calculation for which the full range of necessary data inputs usually acquired from a household income and expenditure

survey are simply not available. However, one variable for which data are readily available concerns the relative cost of purchasing foodstuffs in the Pilbara compared to the state capital. Since 2001, the Pilbara Development Commission has administered the Pilbara Price Surveillance Scheme to compare grocery and fuel prices in the region with those prevailing in Perth. The surveys are conducted in major supermarkets and so reflect urban prices only. From the perspective of Indigenous community stores and homeland settlements the relativities in prices revealed by these surveys will be absolute minimums. Results from this survey for the period 2001–05 are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Index of grocery basket costs in Pilbara towns (Perth = 100), 2001–2005

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Dampier	n/a	102.5	110.1	109.6	111.9
Karratha	104.5	107.6	109.3	107.3	107.5
Marble Bar	n/a	145.5	n/a	136.1	134.4
Newman	n/a	110.6	109.3	109.6	114.6
Onslow	121.7	119.6	122.0	122.3	122.0
Pannawonica	110.6	119.5	116.9	117.7	114.2
Parraburdoo	108.7	121.3	117.1	118.1	109.6
Port Hedland	n/a	113.6	115.8	111.8	111.0
Roebourne	n/a	n/a	129.0	128.5	129.5
Tom Price	107.2	113.2	119.7	115.9	120.8
Wickham	n/a	105.1	111.0	109.5	102.6

Source: Pilbara Development Commission.

Notwithstanding methodological problems in comparing prices between places and over time due to variable coverage, as well as due to some averaging for missing items, it is clear that prices across the Pilbara towns surveyed are consistently higher than prices in Perth. Presently, the regional mark-up ranges from nearly 3 per cent to as much as 34 per cent. Certainly, in areas where the Indigenous population is more heavily represented, including in Roebourne, the relative food price index is generally highest (see Interview segment 23, p. 75).

Welfare income

The actual dollar contribution to regional income from employment and non-employment (welfare) sources in 2001 is shown in Table 4.6. According to these calculations, the total gross annual personal income accruing to the population enumerated in the Pilbara amounted to \$1.1 billion. However, only 5 per cent of this (\$58 million) went to Indigenous people despite the fact that they accounted for 15 per cent of the adult population. Of greater interest is the fact that only 3 per cent of the total regional income generated by mainstream employment accrued to Indigenous people. The implications of this are reflected in relative levels of non-employment income that, in this context, may be taken as a crude measure of welfare dependency (see Interview segment 24, p. 75). As

much as 28 per cent of total Indigenous income is attributable to non-employment (welfare) sources compared to only 6 per cent of non-Indigenous income. If CDEP income is also counted as welfare income, owing to its notional link to Newstart Allowance, then the level of Indigenous reliance on income from welfare rises to 36 per cent (see Interview segment 22, p. 75).

Table 4.6. Gross annual personal income (\$) for Indigenous and non-Indigenous adult residents of the Pilbara SD, 2001

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total	Indigenous % share of income
CDEP	4 759 040	n/a	4 759 040	100.0
Mainstream	37 239 800	1 033 787 560	1 071 027 360	3.5
Unemployment	2 289 040	9 702 160	11 991 200	19.1
Not in the labour force	13 984 880	58 404 840	72 389 720	19.3
Total	58 272 760	1 101 894 560	1 160 167 320	5.0
Welfare share (exc CDEP)	0.28	0.06		
Welfare share (inc CDEP)	0.36	0.06		

Source: ABS 2001 Census customised place of enumeration tables.

The distribution of income by notional source is also of interest when compared to that recorded for Indigenous people across remote Australia by the 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS). This revealed that CDEP accounted for 28 per cent of Indigenous incomes, other wages and salaries accounted for 19 per cent, and government pensions and allowances accounted for 45 per cent. Thus, compared to the average for remote Australia, the Pilbara emerges as quite distinct, with a much lower reliance on CDEP and government payments, and much greater reliance on mainstream wages and salaries. However, as we shall see, there are questions surrounding the real level of dependence on government payments, while the lack of access to administrative data on CDEP wages also raises doubts about that level as well.

One issue that arises in the Pilbara in terms of regional development is the extent to which potential investment dollars earned in the region are lost due to FIFO and other transitory workers remitting their earnings elsewhere (see Interview segment 21, p. 74). The only direct way to estimate this would be to establish the actual incomes of such workers from company records. One indirect way is to recalculate the figures in Table 4.6 using usual residence instead of place of enumeration data. The difference between the two represents a proxy for the income of Pilbara-based non-residents. Overall, this reveals that the usual resident population of the Pilbara earned \$169 million less in 2001 than those enumerated there. In terms of income from employment, the shortfall was \$127 million (about 12% of regional income from employment). This then provides a crude estimate of lost regional income. Of course, this is likely to be a minimum estimate as an unknown number of usual residents of the Pilbara no doubt also repatriate a component of their earnings. All of this assumes, of course, that individuals

enumerated in the Pilbara who were classified as employed actually had their place of employment within the Pilbara. While this is probable, it is not certain.

Centrelink

Because the census-based calculation of non-employment income provides only a proxy measure of dependency on welfare spending, attempts have been made in previous studies to establish a more precise measure of this using administrative data on the composition of welfare income obtained from Centrelink. These data typically produce a higher estimate of welfare income than that generated from census data (Taylor 2004a, 2004b; Taylor & Westbury 2000), and much more in line with the 2002 NATSISS finding that 45 per cent of Indigenous people in the remote Australia are reliant on government payments as their main source of income.

With a view to applying this same method, the amounts paid in benefits (excluding CDEP) to Indigenous Centrelink customers in the Pilbara for a single fortnight in 2005 were requested. Approval for the release of such data are now required by unanimous agreement from three Commonwealth departments—the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, the Department of Family and Community Services, and the Department of Education, Science and Training—as well as Centrelink. However, on advice from Centrelink, such approval is only presently provided for analyses that are focused on locations or regions that host a COAG Indigenous Communities Coordination Project (ICCP) Trial. As this is not the case for any part of the Pilbara, this important piece of regional economic information is not available.

What are available, however, are the number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous customers classified by type of Centrelink payment received for the fortnight ending March 11, 2005. For reference purposes, these data are shown in full for each SLA within the Pilbara in Table 4.7. It should be noted that customers can receive more than one payment and so aggregate totals shown are of payments, not discrete customers. It should also be noted that Indigenous numbers in these data are as reported to Centrelink by self-identification and the accuracy of such reporting is not known. To render the task of interpretation easier, the data shown in Table 4.7 is distilled to the Pilbara-wide scale in Table 4.8 in order to examine the regional Indigenous share of payments by type.

Table 4.7. Indigenous and non-Indigenous Centrelink customers by payment type, Pilbara SLA, 2005^a

	Ashburton		East Pilbara		Port Hedland		Roebourne	
	Ind.	Non-Ind	Ind.	Non-Ind	Ind.	Non-Ind	Ind.	Non-Ind
TES^b								
Austudy	0	* ^c	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newstart	145	134	99	28	252	86	174	96
Newstart mature age	0	*	0	0	*	*	0	*
Partner allowance	*	*	0	*	0	*	8	*
Sickness	0	*	0	0	0	0	0	*
Widow allowance	*	*	*	*	*	*	8	*
Youth allowance	44	38	*	*	56	23	29	29
Total TES	321	224	192	49	396	122	264	147
Pensions								
Age pension	67	395	44	52	79	160	24	124
Carer pension	*	26	*	*	*	*	*	*
Disability support	124	191	67	30	187	126	132	97
Parenting payment single	198	115	82	34	303	107	159	158
Wife pension (Age)	*	*	*	*	*	*	0	*
Wife Pension (DSP)	*	*	*	*	*	*	0	*
Total Pensions	424	746	213	119	620	409	324	386
Other								
Abstudy (> 16)	43	*	*	0	71	*	42	*
Abstudy (< 16)	84	*	*	0	109	*	82	*
Isolated children	*	128	*	*	*	*	0	26
Child disability	35	80	*	23	40	65	0	0
Orphan pension	*	*	0	0	0	0	*	*
Family tax benefit	361	807	213	245	513	600	326	840
Parenting payment partnered	43	57	48	*	59	29	67	48
PES (Abstudy)	*	*	*	0	*	0	*	*
PES (FaCS)	*	*	0	0	0	*	0	0
Total Other	586	1086	323	286	819	709	546	978
Grand total	1331	2056	728	454	1835	1240	1134	1684

^aAs at March 2005.

^bTES = Total Employment Services.

^c* denotes value less than 20.

Source: Centrelink Programming Services, Brisbane.

Thus, in the Pilbara as a whole, Indigenous people account for almost half of all Centrelink payments despite accounting for only 15 per cent of the adult population. More importantly, Indigenous people account for fully two-thirds of all Newstart payments (totalling 670 Indigenous clients), almost 60 per cent of all Youth Allowance payments (129 Indigenous youth), and more than half of all disability payments (510 Indigenous adults). Unfortunately, these data were not made available by sex for confidentiality reasons. However, if we take those on disability pensions alone, we could immediately subtract these from the ranks of those not in the labour force shown in Figs. 3.7 and 3.8 on the

assumption that they are not available for work.¹ This represents 30 per cent of the 1723 Indigenous male and females who are not in the labour force, and at a stroke this would reduce the number in this cohort who might theoretically be drawn into the labour force to just 1213.

Table 4.8. Indigenous and non-Indigenous Centrelink customers by payment type: Pilbara SD, 2005^a

Payment type	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total	Indigenous % of total
Newstart	670	344	1014	66.1
Partner allowance	8	0	8	100.0
Widow allowance	8	0	8	100.0
Youth allowance	129	90	219	58.9
Total NSS	1173	542	1715	68.4
Age pension	314	651	965	32.5
Carer pension	0	26	26	0.0
Disability support	510	444	954	53.5
Parenting payment single	742	414	1156	64.2
Total Pensions	1581	1487	3068	51.5
Abstudy (> 16)	156	0	156	100.0
Abstudy (< 16)	275	0	275	100.0
Isolated children	0	154	154	0.0
Child disability	75	168	243	30.9
Family tax benefit	1413	2492	3905	36.2
Parenting payment partnered	217	134	351	61.8
Total Other	2274	3059	5333	42.6
Total payments	5028	5261	10 289	48.9
Total Income support payments ^b	3615	2769	6384	56.6

^aAs at March 2005.

^bTotal payments less FBT.

Source: Centrelink Programming Services, Brisbane.

In considering these data, it is important to distinguish Family Tax Benefit (FTB) payments from those that are more clearly designed for income support purposes. The FTB is a complex payment and there are a number of issues that need to be taken into account when using FTB data. For example, FTB customers who receive less than the maximum rate usually have family incomes in excess of \$32 500 a year and therefore are not generally considered to be part of the 'welfare' population. However, customers who receive less than the maximum rate because of the operation of the maintenance income test, can have low family incomes and would be considered part of the 'welfare population'. Unfortunately, disaggregation of the Pilbara population in this way was not possible. However, on Centrelink's advice, approximately one-third of FTB customers are also on income support payments and are therefore counted twice in Table 4.8. If we focus solely on income support payments, net of FTB, we can see from Table 4.8 that the Indigenous share of such payments rises to 56.6 per cent. However, this

¹ This is an assumption only and note is taken of the new federal initiatives to encourage workforce participation by those on disability pensions.

share varies across the Pilbara and the data in Table 4.7 indicate that Indigenous customers account for 44 per cent of all income support payments in Ashburton, 71 per cent in East Pilbara, 67 per cent in Port Hedland, and 55 per cent in Roebourne SLAs.

As noted earlier, actual disbursements associated with each of these payments were not forthcoming from Centrelink. Consequently, an attempt is made here to derive a crude estimate of the global amount paid out by Centrelink in the Pilbara by using indicative data on average spending per customer from previous studies of similar remote regions. Thus, in both the East Kimberley and in the Tharrarrurr region of the Northern Territory, both of which are not dissimilar to the Pilbara in terms of their profile of Indigenous disadvantage, average spending by Centrelink per customer per fortnight amounted to \$300 (Taylor 2004a, 2004c). If we apply this same amount to the customer numbers for the Pilbara we derive a fortnightly Centrelink expenditure of \$1.5 million for Indigenous customers, and \$1.6 million for non-Indigenous customers, or \$3.1 million combined. We can then annualise these amounts simply by multiplying the fortnightly payments by 26. This produces figures of \$39 million for Indigenous customers, \$42 million for non-Indigenous customers, and \$81 million in total. While this latter figure is very similar to the gross figure of \$84 million due to persons not employed in Table 4.6, the Indigenous and non-Indigenous amounts are very different with the former being much lower and the latter much higher than the census-based estimates. Ultimately, the fact remains that the actual size of the welfare economy in the Pilbara region remains off the public record. All we can say, based on estimates from public access information, is that it is likely to be in the region of \$80 million per annum, with Indigenous people and their families in receipt of at least half of this.

Indigenous perspectives

Interview segment 17

Well young people, like some young married couples, they might need their own space, but the thing is they cannot survive on their own. They are not independent; they still rely on their mum and dad or their grandparents you know. Lot of people are the same. Like that dole money you know, there now, they say, 'why should I go and work?' They stay on that and might pay \$50 rent but that's nothing, they comfortable because they got everything. They can live on that. I am on that too, and I am surviving, because I budget my money. I can manage on that, and its not even \$400 a fortnight, and I'm on CDEP, plus I got three kids going to school and you know lunch money, plus the running costs for the motor car, 40 kilometres to go to town shopping, fuel, and we have our bills.

Interview segment 18

Well myself, I've always got enough left just before the next pay, you know like families when you lend them the car, it's hard, hard life but you can't say no. So this house is the John Howard house! Everybody comes here when they need or want something, so we are giving giving giving but not receiving. People don't pay us back, which is a problem, we got nothing today, otherwise we gotta wait for pay day. If people ask for the car we give it as long as they put fuel in that's good enough, if they want to go into town, just the fuel. It's a car it doesn't run on air. The other thing for me to get paid (on CDEP) I gotta go and do the hours, 36 a fortnight. I get paid peanuts really.

Interview segment 19

Government has taken over the profile of CDEP and painted it up to be a good thing, but really they are just underpaid, doing good work, but underpaid. I know of someone who moved out of a rental house in January this year, and they charged them \$50 an hour for professional cleaners to come in and clean it after. CDEP workers are lucky to get \$8 per hour and yet they often do the same sort of work – cleaning and the like. That's cheap labour!

Interview segment 20

Old people have grown up and had to earn their money. They had to feed themselves and they know that. But when all the young people in that house, they all grown up and the nanas and stuff been feeding them so they're dependent on that. Even when they get their own money, when they do the CDEP, because of that dependency they go and blow their own money on whatever they want, but they don't buy the food. They are dependent, they haven't learnt, and when nothing's in the cupboard then nana has to go house to house to get a bit of tucker. And then that nana and them start getting cut short because they can't spin their money out till the next pension, because they starting to feed them. But they are grown up men and women!

Interview segment 21

Another problem for our people is they don't like the idea of fly-in-fly-out taking away jobs from locals. It's not even an Aboriginal non-Aboriginal issue, whitefellas who live here permanent, they like the country, like the place and they want to be permanent but they can't. It's cheaper for the industry and they are building houses for fly-in-fly-out mob. But for people local its bad for business as they take their money away, every ten days they get a week off, they aren't going to spend money here. Lot of local businesses can't cope. When I first came to Tom Price we had three Chinese shops – all gone now there's only one left.

Interview segment 22

You find this anywhere, white or black. Easy street is what our younger generation prefer these days, everything easy, sit on the dole, why work, why go and slave yourself around you see? But sometimes we make em work for it though by going on those survey and heritage for mining with the anthropologists, all working, and that is a hard job! But also it's an education, and a learning process, there's so many hats in that job. Whereas if you put em here just cleaning the maid rooms, which I've been doing, I learn nothing from it, I'm just making an income just to live. But there's nothing from it, I don't benefit from it. You need to get in a good job to get confidence and identity, I reckon, and you need your home base to be good too. So you can enjoy going home, your morale stuff at home, all is good in the home, gets you up in the morning, gets you to work, enjoy your work, enjoy your colleagues, enjoy being a part of a team. And that's not working much around round here!

Interview segment 23

It's an expensive place to live. By the time I buy food, \$200–\$250 from the store for the week. And then it's gone until the next pay day. I have to go shooting for my meat, can't afford to buy 'im. At the moment I got my family out at the community. I go weekends but they sometimes come and see me. I have to keep the work happening out there, because I can't get anyone to work out there, because a lot of them don't know how to. They'd rather be back here in town putting the music on and you know. Their parents never learn them, and gave them too much of a long rope with their kids and give them money money money. Even CDEP starting to fall down too. If people don't work then we don't pay 'em. But they been seeing others elsewhere who haven't been doing the work and still getting paid, and they are trying to do it here, and they keep trying to do it here. What's happening is that they got no money and they starting to hit the older people, and everybody in the community they start to bludge off.

Interview segment 24

And that's where the problem is, it's not having a nice home, not able to have money that you can access at any day of the week, you have to live off money week by week, still welfare dependent, that we need to get off because that is what this mining is all about. Unfortunately our infrastructures couldn't work that way. Not blaming anybody, but it didn't work and now we gotta look at a way it can work.

