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Gkuthaarn, Kukatj and Kurtijar Peoples

Queensland

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Research Unit
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TITLE: Research Report Bibliographies
Introduction

The Tribunal’s Research Unit prepares bibliographies as a ready reference for anyone wanting to locate readily available, published material about Indigenous Australian people within a particular region or locality. The bibliographies are produced for general library use from reports prepared by the Tribunal for parties to native title mediations. The bibliographies are not exhaustive reference lists about any particular Indigenous group, nor is the published material necessarily an accurate or insightful report of Indigenous society. The Research Unit may update bibliographies from time to time, usually because a new research report has been reproduced for parties to mediation.

It should be noted that the contents and production of these reports are governed by time and resource constraints. They are often prepared in four to eight weeks by a single research officer with some input from a research assistant and Tribunal librarian. Generally most of the references sought for these reports are available only from the AIATSIS library, which in turn has limited resources available to supply material. Therefore care is taken to request only that material which appears relevant to the scope of a particular report.

Disclaimer: The bibliographies are a list of materials that have been used by the Research Unit of the Tribunal to provide background information for native title mediations. The Tribunal forms no view on the accuracy, completeness, or relevance of the reference material cited in these bibliographies. Most of this material is held at libraries and is available to the public. The Tribunal library may be able to assist in locating items.
Gkuthaarn, Kukatj and Kurtijar Peoples Report

This report was prepared by staff of the Research Unit of the National Native Title Tribunal, in order to provide research assistance to the Carpentaria Land Council, with the specific purpose of making available basic research materials for a prospective native title claim by the coastal Gkuthaarn, Kukatj and Kurtijar people of the southwestern Carpentaria region. There are many different language names and tribal names identified by anthropologists, linguists, missionaries, other observers and Indigenous people for the groups in the area under study. However, for organisational purposes particular attention has been paid to Tindale’s 1974 variations for these groups: Kalibamu, Marrago, Kukatja, Kareldi and Kunggara (and/or alternatives names).

To date, the groups have made no native title claims in the region. However, based on the areas most commonly identified by the literature in this report, the country of interest lies within a general area defined broadly by the following points:

- on the western border by a line running from the mouth of the Leichhardt River south to Augustus Downs Station;
- on the eastern border by a line running from the Staaten River east to Dorunda Station;
- on the southern border by a line running through Vanrook and Glencoe Stations to Maggieville Station south to Normanton, then south to the Norman River south of Milgarra Station, and further south to Donors Hill Station and finally west to Augustus Downs Station; and
- On the north by the coastline of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Towns within the area include Bourketown, Normanton and Karumba. Major rivers include the Leichhardt, Norman, Cloncurry, Flinders, Smithburne, Gilbert and Staaten, and important creeks mentioned in the literature include the Spear, Vanrook, Forest and Belmore.
This report is based on publicly and readily available information that describes the location of the Kuthant/Gkuthaarn, Kukatja and Kurtjar people (including common alternative names) and the various locations that form part of their territory, as indicated by the sources.

**Research Method**

This report contains summaries of information that is publicly available and relevant to the traditional location of groups within the region (the study area). It should be noted that the contents and production of these reports are governed by time and resource constraints. They are usually prepared in six weeks by a single research officer with some input from a research assistant and Tribunal librarian. Many of the references sought for these reports are available only from the AIATSIS library which has limited resources available to supply material. Therefore care is taken to request only that material which appears relevant to the scope of a particular report.

A search was made of the AIATSIS library catalogue, MURA, for references which applied to the geographical area. The material generated by the AIATSIS search was supplemented by relevant references found in Tindale’s (1974) *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia*. The following general references were also used:

- Davidson, 1938a, *A Preliminary Register of Australian Tribes and Hordes*;
- Davis, 1993, *Australia’s Extant and Imputed Traditional Aboriginal Territories*;
- Horton, 1994, *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*;
- Oates and Oates, 1970, *A Revised Linguistic Survey of Australia*; and
- Tindale, 1940, 'Distribution of Australian Aboriginal tribes: a field survey';
- Greenway, 1963, *Bibliography of the Australian Aborigines and the natives of Torres Strait to 1959*. 
The research material used for this report is based largely on a search of the AIATSIS on-line catalogue. As well as using the terms 'Kukatja (G28)', 'Kuthant/Gkuthaarn (G31)' and 'Kurtjar (G33)' in the language field, the catalogue was searched using the following 1:250 000 survey map sheet numbers corresponding to the study area: Galbraith (SE54-3), Burketown (SE54-6), Normanton (SE54-7), and Donors Hill (SE54-10). Additionally, the alternative Tindale terms 'Kalibamu', Marrago', Kukatja', 'Kareldi', and 'Kunggara' were searched. A search was also made according to the names of prominent towns, rivers and mountain ranges within the study area. Each record was examined to determine its likely relevance or usefulness. Materials with access or reproduction restrictions were omitted, as were foreign language materials, obvious duplications, apparent cataloguing errors, microforms, audio material and material that appeared to deal with technical aspects of language or education curricula. Materials relating to places or areas clearly outside of the study region were also omitted.

The result of these searches is set out below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map Sheet No.</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>After filtering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Galbraith SE54-3</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burketown SE54-6</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normanton SE54-7</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors Hill SE54-10</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>366</strong></td>
<td><strong>129</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The searches of prominent landmarks, rivers and towns ultimately identified the same works as the map sheet search. It is also noted that not all potentially useful items listed in the MURA search were available for examination at the time of the research. Some works found are also duplicated across a number of map-sheet areas.
The Tribunal's library holdings were also examined for material relevant to language/tribal group in the region. The Tribunal's Research Reports on native title applications in the region were also examined for material relevant to the present report.
Bibliography

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