





Data from (Chapple & Collier 2014) and (Wyatt & Hames 2013)

Figure 1 displays data received from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) on the number of sites reported (blue), ACMC assessed (red), determined as sites (green) and not being a site (purple). There are some important factors to note when interpreting the data. Firstly, the DAA has a 70 day performance target for assessing section 18 notices, from lodgement to Ministerial decision. Therefore the sites lodged within a particular month are unlikely to have a relationship with the sites assessed for the same month, i.e. the 'Aboriginal heritage places' that are assessed by the ACMC for any month would have been lodged with the register approximately 8 weeks previously (Chapple & Collier 2014).

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs reported the data for the time January 2011 to June 2013 expressed in Figure 1 in 6 month periods. The data from July 2013 to May 2014 was reported in 1 month periods (see break down in Figure 2), but has been summed and expressed here in 6 month periods in order to be meaningfully compared to the previous data reported in 6 month periods.

It has been stated by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs that most of the sites lodged within the period of July 2013 to May 2014 were submitted with notices lodged under Section 18 (Chapple & Collier 2014). There has not been information provided if this is also the case for the months January 2011 through to June 2013. Sites submitted with notices lodged under Section 18 can affect the interpretation of the data in a number of ways. These sites may not necessarily have been submitted because of their significance or importance by the reportee, but rather as part of a heritage site avoidance or salvage operation in accordance with land use that may disturb an Aboriginal site.

It should also be noted that the period January to May 2014 represents 5 months, not 6 months like all other periods. This represents the most up to date information released by the DAA. Interestingly, it can be noted that the January to May 2014 period represents the largest amount of reportings for the entire time reported on, despite being only a 5 month period. This is an effect of the huge spike in reportings in March and April 2014, as can be seen from the higher resolution break down of statistics in Figure 2.

Figure 2 displays numbers of Aboriginal heritage places lodged with the Registrar of Aboriginal Sites under Section 15 of the AHA from July 2013 to May 2014 on a monthly basis. The total number of Aboriginal heritage places lodged for the corresponding month are expressed in (blue). Aboriginal heritage places that were assessed by the APMC for that month are displayed in (red). Aboriginal heritage places assessed by the APMC as a site is displayed in (green), and those heritage places assessed as being not a site are in (purple). Notable in this graph is the spike in sites reported in March and April 2014. The electronic Heritage Information Submission (HIS) forms as part of the Aboriginal Heritage E-lodgement Program (AHELP) were announced as ready to roll out in an email issued on the 10th of April 2014 by John MacDonald, Director of Approvals & Advice at the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. The HIS forms have been available online from the Department of Industry website since June in final form, and for 2 months before that in draft for testing (MacDonald, J. Pers. Comms. 2014).

It was announced that the paper-based versions would not be accepted by August 1 2014 (MacDonald, J. Pers Comms. 2014). This spike in site reportings in the March and April period may reflect the introduction of the draft HIS forms, as ease of use would be expected compared to the previous paper based forms.

These places were processed in line with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs' 70-day performance target for section 18 Notices from receipt to Ministerial decision, and were therefore assessed by the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee approximately eight weeks after lodgement with the Registrar, as stated by Minister Collier in *Question on Notice, Tuesday, 24 June* (2014). Therefore the number of sites assessed by the APMC within a month does not have a relationship with the number of sites lodge for that same month. The 70-day performance target was pointed out by Minister Collier on the 24 of June 2014 in response to questions on notice. It is not clear when this became a target for the DAA, but it came out of the Keating Review in 2002 (MacDonald, J. Pers. Comms. 2014; Keating, M. 2002). Therefore the approximate eight week delay can be assumed to apply to all data presented here. According to the DAA most of these sites lodged were submitted with Notices lodged under Section 18. Note also there was no APMC meeting in January 2014.

Figure 3 displays Aboriginal heritage places lodged (blue) with the Registrar of Aboriginal Sites from July 2013 to May 2014, places assessed by the APMC (red), determined as sites (green) or not a site (purple). Once again please note due to the high resolution of the data (monthly), there is no relationship between potential sites lodged (blue) and potential sites assessed by the APMC (red), as is explained above.

Reference List

Chapple, R. and P. Collier 2014 *Question on Notice, Tuesday, 24 June 2014*. Legislative Council: Western Australian Government.

Keating, M. 2002 *Review of the Project Development Approvals System*. Government of Western Australia.

MacDonald, J. 2014 *Email string on August 29, 2014*.

Wyatt, B. & Hames, K. 2013 *Western Australia Hansard 7 August 2013*, p.3005b. Legislative Assembly: WA Parliament.