

WORKS DEPARTMENT

Roads

The District Council of Coober Pedy Works Department is responsible for the maintenance of more than 300 km of roads in the Council area. The town roads, of which 23 km are sealed and 33 km are unsealed, require an intensive maintenance and upgrading program, particularly after heavy rain as experienced in February 2003 that caused widespread damage. Although no roads were sealed during the 2002/2003 period, a number were top sheeted and formed up which improves durability and ease of maintenance. This is also a precursor to subsequent sealing.

The February rains were also destructive to widespread areas of the opal field roads. Covering some 280 kms, this is a major undertaking to repair and takes men and machines months of work. Included in the field roads are also the roads to Fitzgerald Dam Quarry, Old South Road, Manguri Road, William Creek Road (to town boundary), Oodnadatta Road (to the Dog Fence) and Mount Clarence Road are all maintained by us and are funded by the Grants Commission to ease the burden.



“Bitumen Patching on 17 Mile Road”



Parks & Gardens

Tom Curnow (P & G supervisor) and Ronald Michie (P & G trainee) are responsible for the upkeep of Council’s reserves, including the Keane Reserve & McDougal Road tree plantations, Jewellers Shop Noodling Area, Town Hall Gardens and the Aerodrome to name a few. Daily checks and maintenance of watering systems are carried out at the school oval and triangle, the free BBQ areas and playground. They also sweep roads and assist the works maintenance and construction teams when required. The multipurpose shed and stage area at the oval was concreted and finalized this year.

Staff

There were a number of staff changes throughout the financial year due to the resignation of Greg Watkins (Workshop Supervisor), Bill Michie (Construction/Maintenance) and Ben Michie (Horticultural Trainee). They were replaced by Terry Clark (Construction/Maintenance) and Mick White (Construction/Maintenance). In June 2003 a replacement mechanic was still being sought.

Dog & Cat Management

Tom and Ron also fulfil this role, keeping the errant dogs and cats in check. As well as immunization of these animals for fleas, ticks and mange, this is a free service for registered animals. Significant works were carried out on a new dog pound facility at the effluent treatment compound this year and is expected to be operating soon to cater for the towns growing need. An area has been set-aside as a surgery for visiting vets.



“The new Dog Pound Facility”

Waste Depot

The Council operated Waste Depot (licensed under the EPA) is situated 4 km out of town on the Oodnadatta Road, has commenced the second stage of operation this year which is expected to last until May/June 2004. The Depot operates from 1.00pm to 4.00pm Monday to Sunday and is closed on public holidays. Dumping of household and other waste is free, however Council does charge for truckloads and commercial bins etc. Dumping anywhere else in town or on the field is illegal and Council will prosecute anyone found doing this.

Aerodrome

Council is the owner of the aerodrome that is licensed by CASA (Civil

Aviation Safety Authority) and to meet safety standards it must be checked daily with regular cleaning of lights, markings and markers, sweeping of the runway, taxiway and buildings, grading, rolling, slashing and poisoning of vegetation within the airport runway and taxiway perimeters. Coober Pedy's Aerodrome requires considerable maintenance to keep it to standard for which it has been recognised.

Aged Housing

Council maintains 4 dugout units situated on Harlequin Drive, along with 4 aboveground units on Van Brugge Street, for the elderly and any interested persons requesting occupancy should contact the Community Health Sisters at the Health Centre.

Workshop

The Works Department operate a comprehensive mechanical workshop to maintain and repair all works, water and administration vehicles. This ranges from trucks, loaders, graders and bitumen plant to cars and utes. Minor construction work is also carried out. The workshop is operated by qualified diesel mechanic, James Fairful, and a 4th year apprentice Ben Harrison.

Training

Council is committed to a high standard of development and training for its employees including OHS & W, tickets for equipment, senior first aid courses and work zone traffic management. Also James Michie was trained in Auto Cad and Surveying this year.

Other Works Duties

Sports Area Maintenance
Weather Station
Town Hall Maintenance
Drive In Maintenance
Quarry Sales
Council Building Maintenance
Work Requests
Private Works
Breakaways Reserve Maintenance
Cemetery Maintenance
Contribution of labour and machinery
to help bring the Opal Festival and
Cooper Pedy Race Weekends to
fruition.



From left: Ronald Michie with Parks & Gardens
Supervisor Tom Curnow



**Darren Zechner, Works Manager
(commenced 22/9/03) for Kym Hunt,
former Works Manager**

WATER SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Coober Pedy Water Supply System, comprising bore field, desalination plant, storage and reticulation has been in operation now for 18 years. Some areas of the operation are showing their age and require constant maintenance and some areas are being upgraded as time and finances permit.

BOREFIELD

In some areas the asbestos cement pipeline from the bore field to Oolgelima Creek, some 15 kilometres from Coober Pedy, has been reacting with minerals in the Moon Plain area and has deteriorated badly. This section of pipeline is being replaced with heavy duty P.V.C. pipe known as "Blue Brute" as time, weather and water usage permits. The 202 pipes (1,212m) that have been replaced in the last year have seen a reduction of leakages in the AC pipeline.

Gas substitution is still employed on genset motors at the bore site, making a saving on fuel and maintenance costs.

WATER TREATMENT PLANT

Since the new plant was installed in mid-November 2001, long overdue maintenance has now been completed as it had been impossible to do so previously. The underground tank (known as the snake pit) was relined and is holding water, giving the town an additional two days storage capacity. The original Reverse Osmosis plant is still performing well, with the R.O. membranes having passed the 4 ½ year mark.



Water Supply Manager Les Hoad

RETICULATION SYSTEM

The town reticulation system is showing signs of age, with some ductile iron fittings and valves rusting, causing occasional smelly and discoloured water. Water Supply staff are replacing fittings and repairing leaks continually in an effort to maintain the standards consumers are used to. However some interruptions to supply and small amounts of discoloured water are inevitable. Water Supply staff urge consumers to notify the council of water quality irregularities and suspected system leaks (damp patches on ground) to enable prompt attention by staff.



Alex Morgan checking filter membrane instruments

WATER QUALITY

The District Council of Coober Pedy is committed to providing the highest

achievable water quality as per guidelines recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia (NHMRC), which provide the basis for maintaining quality control.

Water samples are collected and undergo bacteriological and chemical analysis on a monthly basis, or more frequently if deemed necessary, by the S.A. Water Corporation at its Australian Water Quality Centre at Bolivar. Daily tests are also carried out in-house to maintain quality.



Phil Van Poorten checking pre-treatment instruments

SEWERAGE SYSTEM

The sewerage scheme has been operating efficiently with normal preventative maintenance and repairs being carried out.

The quality of treated effluent has been maintained to correct levels as required by the Government Statutory Bodies, and is evidenced by the condition of the irrigated school oval and Triangle recreation areas, which are a credit to the Parks and Gardens department of Council. There is still quite a margin between our current minimum and maximum intake, indicating that more properties could be connected.

Les Hoad
Water Supply Manager

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

Generation

There has been a great deal of activity in the power station this year, with the electronic control systems causing considerable problems resulting in power supply interruptions. These problems ultimately led to the main power station being shut down in November 2002 and replaced by four hire generators from Adelaide.

Over a period of time the old and outdated generator control system was replaced following the design and installation of a suitable program. This process was integral in addressing both the short and long term power generation needs and despite initial integration problems, is now performing well.

Decommissioning and removal of No. 4 generator will be followed later by a partial overhaul of No. 5 generator in order for it to maintain supply during the summer period.

There have been a number of frustrating faults that have caused many a headache, most of which are believed to have been a result of a PLC (Programmable Logic Control) malfunction.

Rental of the generator sets from Adelaide has had an enormous financial impact on Council, which has expedited the need to identify and rectify mechanical and program problems. In May 2003 two of the rental sets were returned to Adelaide, thereby alleviating the financial strain to some degree.



Electricity Supply Manager, Brian Mooney

High Voltage Switchboards

Servicing and maintenance was carried out during September and this has helped to alleviate problems that were experienced with expensive circuit breakers and related equipment that contributed to the power station failure. High voltage servicing of this type is highly specialised and must be carried out by personnel with the necessary certification. This duty should be performed annually however it would appear that it was last carried out four years ago.



Vonnie Ferguson, Administration Assistant

Distribution

The Distribution team continues to work well, despite the loss of two fulltime linespersons over the past twelve months. Due to a national shortage of tradespersons, it has proven almost impossible to attract permanent personnel to Coober Pedy. Consequently Council has secured hire

labour from an Adelaide-based organisation to assist in covering the extensive work program, which includes continuous upgrading of the overhead system.

Wherever possible, new services and alterations are being installed underground and the removal of poles from private properties and realignment of services is now being addressed.



Peter McBain, Electricity Supply Distribution

A multi-purpose vehicle designed to replace the crane truck and borer has been ordered and will be utilised in conjunction with the existing elevated work platform (EWP) vehicle.

Final details are being prepared to allow for completion of the Safety and Technical Management Plan and related regulation requirements.

Council has contracted ETSA Utilities to conduct a complete audit of the distribution system in Coober Pedy in order for it to comply with ETSA Standards.

SWER Connections

Connections have been completed in four locations, those being Aston Road, Stuart Highway, St Elijah Drive and Wedgetail Crescent. An upgrade of the Low Voltage mains has been carried out in Gough Street, Seventeen

Mile Road, Italian Club Road and Flats Drive.

SWER Earth Testing

This is now underway in the Hopeful Hills area, with faults being rectified when located.

Street Lighting

Maintenance and repairs are ongoing with the replacement of the old 40 Watt fluorescent tubes with 80 Watt mercury vapour lights. Damage to street lights has been greatly reduced by fitting smaller wire mesh guards.

Office of the Technical Regulator

Staff from the Office of the Technical Regulator have visited Coober Pedy twice during the reporting period. The purpose of these visits was to advise management of a number of non-compliant conditions. This advice has proven to be very useful resulting in the development of an excellent two-way channel of communication which will stand Council in good stead for future situations that may arise from time to time.

With support from the Office of the Technical Regulator, correction of the areas of concern is progressing as time and resources permit.

Wind Turbine

As a result of the wind turbine not being serviced for seven years, it has become very unreliable. The main problems identified were the hydraulic pressure and air leaks resulting in the brake system malfunctioning. As this equipment plays a significant role in our economy strategy, it was essential that a major service be carried out in

September to have continued optimum efficiency.

Staff Appointments

During the reporting period Mr Gavin Talbot has been appointed as Power Station Operator/"A" Class Electrician, with extensive experience in power generation and automation systems.

I take this opportunity to personally thank those loyal staff members who have risen to the challenge of the past year and given their all under the most trying of circumstances.

Brian Mooney
Manager Electricity Supply



Coober Pedy Power Station

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

The District Council of Coober Pedy receives \$35,000 per annum from the Northern Regional Development Board to enable the Council to assist the Board to achieve economic development outcomes in the Far North of South Australia.

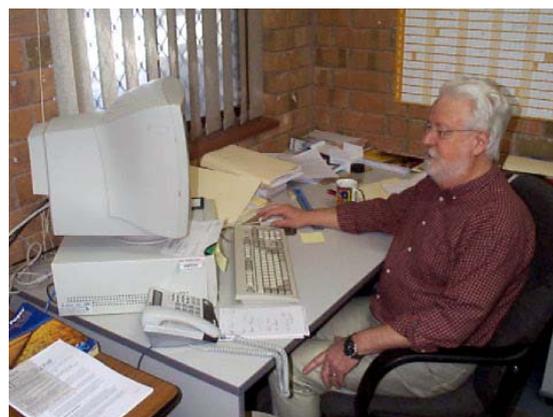
The District Council of Coober Pedy uses these funds to employ a person in the role of Far North Economic Development Officer and Trevor Peek was appointed to the position in April 2002.

The role of the Economic Development Officer provides a link with regional strategies and funding opportunities, as well as acting a contact point in the Far North for initiatives and programs driven by the Port Augusta based officers of the Board.

Some projects for which the Economic Development Officer has been responsible are:

Outback Cinema

Coober Pedy has one of the very few remaining drive-in picture theatres in South Australia, which has been in need of being upgraded for sometime. A grant of \$80,000 was received from the Federal Government's Regional Assistance Program for the refurbishment of the facility that will see a group of dedicated volunteers continue to provide an entertainment venue for the local community as well as the traveller.



Economic Development Officer, Trevor Peek

Oodnadatta Telecentre

The community of Oodnadatta and the traveller now has access to the Internet, Email, on-line banking as well as office facilities due to the establishment of a Telecentre in the town. This has come about with Federal Government funding through the Networking the Nation Program and the substantial input of the Outback Telecentre Network Inc.

Regional Online Tourism Program

The District Council of Coober Pedy had been successful in obtaining Federal Government funding to establish a dedicated tourism website (www.opalcapitaloftheworld.com.au) with an online booking facility. Since going online in January 2003 the usage of the site has increased considerably with major benefits following to the local tourist operators.

Visitor Information Centre

Funding had been sought for the relocation of the Coober Pedy Visitor Information Centre but as this was not successful other options are being considered. Council has had discussions with the Spencer Institute of TAFE about relocating the Visitor Information Centre to the Coober Pedy Campus of the Institute. This would

give a seven-day week facility for the travelling public as well as having the opportunity to gain accreditation through the South Australian Tourism Commission.

Opal Industry Peak Body

The recently produced “National Strategy for the Opal Industry” report identifies the current position of the national opal industry and suggests future strategies to better position the industry in the future. The earlier “Strategic Assessment of the Australian Opal Industry” report by David McKinna et al provides a detailed strategic summary of the industry and suggests future key objectives.

Amongst these is the establishment of a peak industry body that would be representative of opal miners. A Discussion Paper about the peak industry body and draft Constitution was prepared and distributed widely in South Australia’s opal mining fields prior to industry meetings held at Andamooka, Coober Pedy, Lambina and Mintabie.



United Bowling & Sports Association outdoor bowls area - funded with the assistance of the Regional Solutions Program

Once industry agreement is reached on the formation of an industry body the Board will assist the establishment of the body. Also arising out of a recommendation in the David McKinna et al report the establishment of the Australian Opal EBusiness Association has been facilitated.

Trevor Peek
Economic Development Officer

VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

The Visitor Information Centre remains at the Council Administration Facility. Alternative arrangements are still being investigated by Council.

The highlight of the 2002/2003 financial year was the launch and ongoing success of the Opal Capital of the World website. The success of the website can be attributed to the hard work and diligence of Stephen Staines, Tourist Information Officer, and Neil Aitken of Redback Productions.

2003 saw the implementation of a statistics recording system at the VIC. The system provides statistics on numbers of visitors in the Visitor Information Centre each day and their origin. Council has recently changed the service provider of the 1800 free-



Coober Pedy Visitor Information Centre



Tourist Information Officer, Stephen Staines

call number to New Zealand based company Zintel Communications. Zintel provides monthly statistical reports to the Visitor Information Centre including the origin of each call. The new website also tracks the origin of enquires. In due course this statistical data will give Council an accurate depiction of where enquires and visitors originate. It is envisaged that this will assist marketing personnel in the region to better target the marketing dollar to maximise visitation of Coober Pedy and the region.

The Tourist Information Officer also contributed to and was a member of various committees and groups in Coober Pedy including the Youth Sector Network, Youth Advisory Committee, Outback Open Air Cinema, 2003 Opal Festival and the Safety in Opal Mining Committee.

Schedule of Community Grants

During the financial year the following community grants were allocated:

Coober Pedy Motor Club	2,500
Coober Pedy Amateur Racing Club Inc	2,150
Country Fire Service/Coober Pedy Brigade	2,100
Coober Pedy Lions Club/Tiny Peco Productions	1,000
MiniGems Child Care Centre	1,000
Kidz Fun Tent/Table	800
Coober Pedy Area School Out of School Hours Care	800
Kupa Piti Kungka Tjuta	100

\$ 10,450

Census 2001 (As per 2001 Census Statistics)

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Population	1,713	1,349	3,062
Speaks language other than English aged 5 or more	472	308	780
Australian citizens	1,302	1,009	2,311
People of Indigenous Origin	173	164	337

Computers & the Internet

In the week preceding the 2001 Census, 643 people (22%) had used a personal computer.

The total number of persons who had used the Internet in the week preceding the 2001 Census was 662.



Children's playground located in the Triangle recreation area

ELECTED MEMBERS & SENIOR STAFF

Subsequent to the May 2003 Election and as at 30th June 2003

ELECTED MEMBERS

Mayor	BAINES Steve	86 725 140
Deputy Mayor	Maylin, Michael	86 723 891
Councillors	Athanasiadis, Paul	86 725 179
	Blobel, Harry	0407 711 942
	Doulgeris, Tina	0419 416 824
	Rapaic, Boro	86 725 068
	Temple, Rose	86 723 476
	Wardle, Roanna	86 723 309

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION

Chief Executive Officer	McLeod, Trevor	86 725 408
Finance & Administration Manager	Clark, Damien	86 723 828
Manager Electricity Supply	Mooney, Brian	86 723 012
Manager Water Supply	Hoad, Les	86 725 286
Manager Works	Hunt, Kym	86 723 237
	(Since resigned and replaced by)	
Manager Works	Zechner, Darren	86 725 069
Economic Development Officer	Peek, Trevor	86725207

SELECTED STATISTICS FOR **12 MONTHS TO 30TH JUNE 2003**

<u>Properties</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Valuation</u>
Crown Land (non-rateable)	322	10,566,788
Vacant	283	3,115,805
Residential	1,152	51,236,062
Commercial & Industrial	131	21,584,145
Other non-rateable	2	285,000
Primary	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>86,787,800</u>

Building Applications (Commercial Only)	12
Planning Applications	47
Land Division	1

Water Supply Department

Raw water pumped from bore field	426,690 kl
Potable water produced	297,356 kl
Desalination operating hours	9,584 hrs
Number of customers	1,587
New connections for 12 months to 30.6.2003	5
Highest recorded daily water demand	1,153 kl

Electricity Supply Department

Kilowatt hours of electricity generated (including Wind Turbine)	13,009,703 kwh
Town Consumption	12,807,170 kwh
Fuel consumed (litres)	3,721,831 lt

Works Department

Roads – Council road lengths at 30th June 2003 (includes roads to mining fields)

Lengths at end of year	<u>Sealed</u>	<u>Formed</u>	<u>Unformed</u>	<u>Natural surface</u>	<u>Total</u>
In built-up areas (km)	23.00	38.00			61.00
In non built-up areas (km)	2.00	102.00	<u>14</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>274.00</u>
Total Road Lengths	<u>25.00</u>	<u>140.00</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>335.00</u>