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ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER  
HEALTH SERIES, NO. 7**

**A bibliography of drug use  
and related problems among  
Australian Aborigines and  
Torres Strait Islanders**

**Bruce English  
Neil Thomson**



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Bruce English  
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Australian Government Publishing Service  
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# Introduction

The use by Australian Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders of alcohol and other drugs has been a matter of concern for many years. Recently, the National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party and the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody have both directed attention to the impact of a variety of drugs on Aboriginal individuals and communities. The capacity of the Working Party and the Royal Commission to fully address these issues was limited to some degree by the lack of data about both the use and impact of alcohol and other drugs.

This lack of data had been recognised also by the National Drug Abuse Information Centre of the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse, and had resulted in the Australian Institute of Health being commissioned to examine current and potential data sources. A companion volume (Thomson & English 1992) reports on these aspects. In compiling that report, it was necessary to review a wide range of published and unpublished material on the subject. That material has been grouped in this bibliography in the following categories:

- general
- alcohol
- tobacco
- petrol inhalation and solvent abuse
- kava
- other substances.

Material including reference to a number of different drugs is normally included in the general section, along with other sources which have relevance to the area.

Every attempt was made to locate all major references dealing with the use and impact of alcohol and other drugs among Aborigines, but invariably a bibliography such as this will overlook some useful material. The authors would be grateful if copies of this material could be provided to them at the Australian Institute of Health. In this way, it will be possible to publicise the material in the *Aboriginal Health Information Bulletin*, published twice yearly by the Institute. The *Bulletin* summarises all newly identified material in the area of Aboriginal health, so it is a useful adjunct to this bibliography.

It is hoped that this bibliography will be of assistance to all organisations and people interested or working in the area of Aboriginal health, particularly related to the use and impact of alcohol and other drugs.

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