

1 11-19. Consulting Archaeologist and Heritage Specialist. Self-employed. Works
2 with a limited number of clients.
3
4 1 Officially I'm an independent consultant but I'd say that more than 70% of my
5 work comes from one or two sources which are mid-sized consulting firms but
6 I'm not an employee. One of them I'm heavily engaged with so on all their mailing
7 lists, the other occasionally - otherwise direct to clients. [SC: So you do sub-
8 contracting to other companies?] Yes. In the last five years I've worked at [main
9 government heritage management agency in State X] for quite a number of years
10 and all of that stuff – whether that's helpful or not. [SC: Well I'm interviewing a
11 lot of people and several people have lots of hats "Well I work for this company
12 but I'm doing a PhD here, or a work for somebody" so really. People are drawing
13 experiences from all of that.]
14
15 2 Private business
16
17 3 Regularly would be the one to five
18
19 4 There would be one person who does some administration. The rest is
20 archaeology so it would be 90% plus
21
22 5 I would say medium. The larger ones you would know about – those big
23 engineering firms
24
25 SC: [Do you mean [Company X] – or whatever they're called?]. Ah well [Company
26 X] died about ten years ago. Their current iteration is – I can't remember the
27 name – there's ones that are environmental firms with some heritage. There are
28 medium size and large heritage firms which are probably 5-20 employees.
29
30 6 State X
31
32 7 For work obviously it's [the state where I'm based and live]. In terms of peers
33 there would be a focus on [my own state] and [another state] and to a lesser
34 extent [another two states] but my own state and [one other state] is the main
35 axis for me.
36
37 8 No. I see mailing lists – from people – things that come from overseas – but no.
38
39 9 The biggest focus would be heritage management and whatever is subsequent
40 to that. It's fairly standard consulting – look at the development, find whatever
41 you want to call it – the resource, the heritage whatever and develop some
42 management options, record. Look it's research in a very pathetic sense of it. [SC:
43 Can I just ask – I haven't got this on the questionnaire. Are you doing Aboriginal
44 and/or historical archaeology or both?] Only Indigenous. Only Aboriginal.
45
46 10 It depends what you call 'research'. That is there is a distinction between
47 original – you know – research that other people are going to get excited about
48 and you know your standard plodding along background orientation type
49 research.

50

51 11 Frequently. Basically that's what it's about.

52

53 12 That one's interesting. We have professional editors with no heritage
54 background at all who go over reports and things we write. So in that respect
55 that's an old school sort of thing. Look the things I do personally have no relation
56 to that. The organisation has people making a website and things like that. I'm
57 not even sure that the website is up. I know we had communications about that
58 and we had one of the copy editors do a position description for an
59 advertisement and that sort of thing so. They find our writing pretty bad and
60 always [mark?] it up quite badly.

61

62 13 No. You know the lame courses public servants go on – 'Effective
63 Communication' 'Influencing People' [laughs]. No. I've got no formal training.
64 [SC: So you've done short courses when you worked inside government.] Yes but
65 they're very tangential to that. But you could say that.

66

67 14 I've delivered informal training – and this is going back over the last 20 years
68 – to Indigenous representatives about physical archaeology – bones and stones.
69 And at [state government heritage agency] I was involved in the delivery of
70 modules for a Certificate IV TAFE course. I wasn't running it. I was just one of the
71 people who got up and delivered part of the course content and provided a sort
72 of tutor, mentor sort of role.

73

74 15 No

75

76 16 The most direct involvement, and really the only formal one, has been
77 working for the [X state] government, though that is not my current position,
78 where various training and other sorts of funded events - that's the only way to
79 put it. The media tends to get involved when the Minister or a very senior public
80 servant is there and it's all planned by the PR people in the department. And they
81 also have professional photographers there to document it for other promotional
82 material. So at one of them they did have TV people and some print journalists
83 because the minister was there.

84

85 17 Look it's difficult. I also worked with them about 25 years ago at [a
86 Commonwealth government heritage agency] but I can't remember much except
87 that I rode in a helicopter.

88

89 18 The challenges or difficulties are fairly obvious and you could make them up
90 yourself. Our focus is often on the quality of the archaeological or heritage
91 findings and issues around management and conservation. The journalists and
92 media tend to look for an interesting story and a narrative that matches their
93 interests which don't always add to ours. So your classic one might be – look
94 we've found something interesting, there's all this conservation that we in our
95 field believe is required but it's presented as an impediment to other activities
96 whether that be overt development, four-wheel driving, access to remote areas
97 so you tend to get – that balance is never going to satisfy everyone. And I think
98 they tend to – because what we think about are quite obtuse or complex – they

99 tend to get washed out fairly quickly with the more sensational – you know
100 ‘Locals Locked out of Park’ or ‘Companies Impeded from Making a Huge Fortune’
101 [laughs].

102
103 [SC – Explains Qs 19/20. People seeking our or coming to a large organisation].
104 That matches my experience in the public service. The organisation that I’ve got
105 the most to do with now – the person you’d call the head – the principal there –
106 because they are Aboriginal they have a whole lot of connections in terms of
107 being involved in various mid to high level government committees. They know
108 everyone. They tend to do that for that organisation, and I’m personally – just
109 based on personality alone – it’s probably not great that I communicate with
110 people outside of work [laughs]. You’re not sure what the consequences will be.

111
112 21 The vulgar part is that awareness about archaeology and about us generates
113 revenue. That’s the most obvious motivation. And the other thing comes from a
114 more personal, ethical sort of bit – you want to make people aware of what
115 you’ve found so that protection, management, acknowledgment – whatever it is
116 that’s the best outcome can proceed. So if your client is not a rapacious
117 developer that is say a parks and wildlife type organisation then you tend to go
118 down the path of ‘We’ve found something. It’s an asset to the park or area. We
119 want to document it and let the other people involved in this area know about it,
120 whether that’s the public or other park managers or whatever.

121
122 [SC: Do you think you’ve answered Q22 as well?]

123 22 Okay. Look generally the information about archaeology are the fairly generic
124 ones. That is a fairly superficial description of location and content and some sort
125 of narrative or story that people can latch on to. So – you know – ‘There is
126 something here. It consists of stones, bones – you know – an arrangement of
127 material and it tells us about the past life of Aboriginal people’ – in a fairly simple
128 way. That’s generally what happens. I haven’t been involved in any of that
129 writing up of plaques, visitor guides around things for twenty years.

130
131 23 University students as part of degree programmes? I think I’ve seen one or
132 two undergraduates come out as volunteers. Shall I go down the list and say any
133 that I do? Independent travellers or tourists is interesting because occasionally
134 people do stumble across you when you are doing test excavations and want to
135 know what’s going on. And you’ve got to manage that quite carefully because
136 sometimes they are ‘in the know’ locals who are sounding you out [laughs]. So
137 there’s that. Members of Indigenous or Aboriginal organisations – that’s critical
138 to what we do. So that relationship is very important. So we do a lot of.. and
139 sometimes it’s quite adversarial as well. It’s not all butterflies and rainbows.
140 Community organisations – that would be very occasional – something like
141 Landcare. And volunteers – yes. Special Interest Groups? No but I keep meaning
142 to join them. [Alternative archaeologists] Um. That’s why I’m not generally
143 amused [?] with people as they wouldn’t get very far [laughs] – be on about - you
144 know - the Chinese junks travelling around Australia or some such. [SC: So are
145 you saying you don’t communicate with them?] I don’t communicate effectively
146 or for very long [laughs]. It would be more like “You must be joking! Get that shit
147 out of here!” [laughs]. Land or property owners? That’s fairly constant. They’re

148 another stakeholder we've got fairly constant interactions with. Traditional
149 owners – that's the same as [Indigenous] community members. Look it's been a
150 while but I used to do a lot with big mining companies – that I haven't done for
151 two years. Yes – I've done a lot of work in the Pilbarra for various of those big
152 places so. [SC: I've split [clients] up into large and small]. They're very different
153 sorts of. With large companies essentially you – how can I put that? – you are
154 yelling into an big echoing void. No matter how effective your communication
155 with the person you are facing it's pretty certain that it's not going to penetrate
156 the organisation and have any influence. So you may speak to some middle
157 manager at [a large mining corporation]. There's no consequence to that. They
158 will nod. They will say shit. Nothing will happen. [SC: Sounds like the
159 university!]. Yes. With the small organisations you may get a result. And I think
160 it's the same for the Indigenous people. If you're not speaking to the CEO or
161 someone who is a very high level decision maker it's completely pointless. And
162 that's why they send those people to talk to us because they've got no intention
163 of doing what we are saying. And the small and private developers – that is so –
164 because it is a personal interaction you've got a fair idea of how it's proceeding
165 and the outcomes really are dependent on that relationship. So you know there
166 are people who are quite profit-making focused developers and if you can
167 communicate with them that what you are doing has some value and you are
168 reducing risk, getting this done, it fits in with their plans then you do get some
169 reasonable outcomes.

170

171 24 That would be what you would call Aboriginal parties or Aboriginal
172 traditional owners and medium to small developers.

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174 25, 26, 27

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176 25 - That would be most roles. The usual scenario is the implementation of a
177 survey or excavations. You're trying to educate people into trying to understand
178 why we are proceeding in a certain way and what we are looking for and that
179 there is some structure or method. Because everyone's got ideas that they could
180 do it better or I suppose if they think it's just to dig holes they want to barrel on
181 through or.. And you'd be aware that there's all sorts of strategies whether you
182 should clump them together or spread them over a neat pattern. And really
183 trying to explain to people that we're trying to look at the landscape on a human
184 scale can get some way to understanding what it is we are trying to find out. [SC:
185 Is this like some sub-contractors on the site or colleagues?]. This would even be
186 the participants in the survey sometimes. [SC: Other archaeologists?]. Sometimes
187 Indigenous participants and other clients and people like that. You have people
188 out at the first day often and you're trying to explain that. So that's the kick-off
189 bit. And the much more detailed bit I suppose is after you've found something
190 and had reasonable documentation then you're trying to communicate with the
191 people who are going to have to pay for it and that's where you start to get
192 bogged down in ideas about significance or importance and these sorts of
193 options and that can get a lot more tricky because a lot of people are used to
194 making their own decisions. That is they don't actually have to follow any rules
195 because they are spending their own money on engineers or whatever they like –
196 so they expect that from us which turns out to be very difficult because we've got

197 a lot of people in a sense looking over our shoulder with the Indigenous heritage.
198 [SC: So do you think – as some of that ‘mode of communication’ drifted in to the
199 other [categories]].It did. [SC: We can just put that in answer to those three
200 questions – but did you have any other – I mean are there any other types of
201 communication? You’ve already mentioned one when you’ve got people with
202 alternative archaeology views [laughs]]. Look the thing where you are
203 communicating with other experts or professionals. What tends to happen I
204 think is in a lot of circumstances the lack of common ground is that one side is
205 often looking at decision making based on price – that is “This road is going to
206 cost \$10 million this way, \$12 million that way”. \$10 million is clearly the better
207 option for them and they don’t often have a good way to come to terms with the
208 heritage and how that will cost. So that can be quite difficult where we are using
209 a different set of values to what they are using and sometimes it gets very
210 adversarial.

211

212

213 28 Oh god that is a difficult one. I suppose one of the simple ways would be
214 agreement on a set of outcomes or actions – would be the easiest way. And the
215 other way you can pick it up is that people start to use the same terms that you
216 are using so that so that they start to make the distinction between ‘objects’ and
217 ‘sites’ and ‘landscape units’ and various other things. Because people often talk
218 about their project as ‘the site’ if you see what I’m saying – the housing
219 development is the site – you go through a bit of a rigmarole to sort out what
220 these terms mean to each other. So once you start aligning your communication
221 like that then – you may not agree – but at least you have some sort of
222 understanding.

223

224 30 32

225 I don’t set this up. I’m just a consumer of it. So the most useful thing that we use
226 at the moment is what you would call cloud computing or in our case Dropbox
227 where everything is on a common.. and gets updated on my computer by some
228 mystery magic. I can even see it on my phone. And email. I say – I’ve got one of
229 these Android phones so all my emails are pretty instant to me and that is
230 working very well because people fire off stuff even if you are out digging. You
231 hear it beep and you can – in your break – respond to a lot of things so that’s
232 effective. If you start to look at communication in terms of other word
233 processing, map drawing stuff then everything on the computer is useful for that.

234 [SC: Report production – beyond Word – do you do report production? Do you
235 use GIS?]. I’ve used GIS. Someone else does the GIS. I tend to mark up the maps
236 and say ‘this is the information I would like on them’. It’s too tedious – there’s
237 been some dialogue about this on one of these OzArch mailing lists [laughs]. GIS
238 is an appliance and I don’t think we need to know shit about it. We need to be
239 conversant in it. What I do – say – is these are the maps. I use a lot of Linux as
240 well as Windows so whether you are using Adobe – what’s it called – Illustrator
241 or in my case a thing called GIMP and various other ones. What I do is I get the
242 images that have come out of a GIS and I mark them up and say this is where I
243 want things moved to, this is the sorts of comments I want and this is how I want
244 the maps set up. Then I send it to someone else who produces it on a GIS.

245

246 [SC: Okay – so is that within the company?]. Yes within our small organisation.
247 One of the [staff] was formally some sort of IT person. [SC: Okay so you have a
248 team of people so you can work]. Yes – and the editors I suppose is the other
249 thing. So we use a fairly standard word processing and mapping stuff. And
250 obviously Google Earth is fantastic for everyone – which is where I usually start
251 if I rough things up on Google Earth and then draw what I want on it and then the
252 GIS person can put everything accurately on it.

253
254 32 No. Look no. I don't like people to know what I'm doing really to that level of
255 thing [laughs]. No. I know that some of my colleagues, I think, use Facebook.
256 Actually I was on LinkedIn. I think I put my name on it years ago. But I don't use
257 it in any way. I keep getting things to link up to people that I don't know. [SC: You
258 don't like them or you just don't see any use, or?]. Oh, ah um – look – I don't see
259 any benefit to me in using them and I don't find them that interesting. So...[SC:
260 Okay – okay. That's alright.] But the trouble is that I use various other blogs and
261 wikis for other things that I'm interested in. I'm on a few mailing lists, if that
262 counts for anything. [SC: Yes. Well you are obviously on OzArch [laughs]]. Yes
263 [laughs].

264
265 33 34 Well I suppose it makes things much faster than not using computers and
266 digital technologies. It does allow you if you're thinking to get a rough thing up
267 and spread it around and let people have a look at it. The challenges are for us
268 and for me in particular is that you tend to get overwhelmed by data entry and
269 managing information. So even at the moment I've got some project we did
270 where there are – you know – I can't even remember how many – but there's
271 over 400 of these test pits and someone's got to data entry that and then I've got
272 to make sense of it. And in general I think there's a lot of people that once the
273 data entry is done and that's it you've got a table to put in – but of course you
274 can't write anything about that. You can't just say 'See Table 1 – all the
275 information is there. Interpret it yourself' [laughs]. You've got to do that – so – it
276 can superficially look easier than it is. So I do spend a lot more time on analysis
277 than you would think you would. And that slows it down. And then all the other
278 things that we need to put in our reports – you know things like photographs,
279 and graphs and layout and stuff they're time consuming things. But I do
280 remember the old school way of you know gluing photos to a piece of paper and
281 someone took it to a printer – so it's much better than that. [SC: Yes several
282 people have been reminiscing about that. I'm of an age where I used to glue
283 photos in but not any more. So...we used to write things on a type writer and cut
284 and paste.] Yes. Quite literally cut and paste. I remember that. I started using a
285 Mac when I was at uni so a few of my friends were doing that – scissors and
286 sticky tape and big long untidy looking thing..

287
288 35 Excellent. I don't get viruses and stuff but then I would never buy a Mac
289 because that's for idiots. [SC: So are you a PC person?]. Well yes. But I make sure
290 it's all on Linux – it's all that free software stuff. Something philosophical that I
291 bought into about ten years ago and now I'm stuck in terms of – you know –
292 you've made a commitment to not buying commercial software and you just then
293 never do it [laughs].

294

295 36 Well for the GIS stuff it's through one of my peers who's got that expertise. In
296 a lot of other ways I would be doing it myself and providing it to other people
297 based on – I'm on quite a few computing-type mailing lists for Linux. [SC: Okay.].
298 And you know in my family I'm the one they all phone up and say 'Blah, blah,
299 blah'. [SC: So you're providing ICT support to everybody else?] Not much
300 [laughs]. Cos the only issue people have is with GIS. Almost everything else
301 people can work out. We occasionally have what you would call corrupted
302 documents and that's a thing that we fix between us. We email it around and say
303 'Look we're all using different versions of stuff. Save it as this and that.'

304

305 37. No. I had seen on one of the mailing lists recently someone talking about –
306 commenting on social media – and using the term 'if people are intimidated by'
307 Facebook, Twitter or whatever it was. And I was thinking that's such a sales and
308 marketing turn of phrase even though it was a person who normally puts up
309 reasonably funny things. I was thinking 'You've bought into seeing that's useful
310 without actually demonstrating any efficacy in using it'. So – and that's probably
311 where I am at the moment. Like we use email, various things, I don't know – I
312 have a video phone and I think I've made two video calls in four years. They are
313 completely useless. But with this social media for what I'm seeing of it – because
314 my wife's got Facebook and stuff – is there's just a shit storm of rubbish from
315 people with nothing better to do than comment. You know. And you can quote
316 me on the "shit storm of rubbish" [laughs]. A 'tsunami' of rubbish might be more
317 academic [laughs].