

1 11-04 Cultural Heritage Officer. Utility Company.

2

3 Q1. I am the X Cultural Heritage Officer for the Y region of state Z. So I guess I am  
4 responsible for [Organisation X's] Cultural Heritage Assessment Management  
5 process in an area which extends from X in the north to Y to Z and W [an area of  
6 many hundreds of kilometres] though in practice I tend to work between place A  
7 and the coast more so. Organisation X has obviously builds and maintains  
8 infrastructure – [installations] and the like in [region Y of state Z] so we have  
9 responsibilities under the [state heritage legislation covering Aboriginal and  
10 non-Aboriginal cultural heritage] as well as various other acts, to make sure that  
11 Organisation X complies with the legislation and maintains our duty of care as a  
12 cultural heritage manager. That's my answer.

13

14 Q2. We're actually a government owned corporation. So we are government and  
15 we're also a business that operates at some distance from government  
16 nevertheless with government oversight or regulation. We are [explains business  
17 model]..

18

19 Q3. The organisation has about forty five hundred (4,500) staff across [two  
20 states].

21

22 Q4. Well [my organisation] only has three Cultural Heritage staff in the state plus  
23 a Native Title Officer and some various support staff. Maybe we're looking at –  
24 just thinking through – 3, 4, 5, 6 – we might sat, let's say ten staff directly  
25 involved in cultural heritage management. We don't do pure archaeology here.  
26 We don't do any excavations or any of that type of activity. We do a lot of  
27 fieldwork and a lot of assessments and risk assessments but we don't – we  
28 wouldn't classify ourselves as archaeologists.

29

30 Q5. I would think we would be comparable in size with most – no that's not true  
31 – I would think we would have a smaller cultural heritage workforce than some  
32 [state] government departments. I know in [another major state government  
33 department] when I was there they had a staff of about thirty five cultural  
34 heritage officers and I would imagine that [organisation Z] would have many  
35 more because they have oversight of the [Aboriginal heritage legislation] so they  
36 would have a lot of compliance officers as well. So we would be medium I think.  
37 We would certainly not be big and we would not be small. There must be  
38 organisations with less than us but not too many. It's not a particularly good  
39 answer but

40

41 Q6. [State Z].

42

43 Q7. Well my manager is in [town X] and there is another cultural heritage officer  
44 in [the same town] who is my equivalent there. I am based in [town Y]. The  
45 Cultural Heritage support officer here is based in [town Y]. We have another  
46 Cultural Heritage staff member based at [town W] and we are advertising for an  
47 additional position so that I think we would be based in those major regional  
48 centres [located several 100 km apart].

49

50 Q8. No. We are a state-wide business with regional focus.  
51  
52 Q9. I guess heritage management and conservation is my focus within the  
53 business. The business' focus itself is to be a [utility] business.  
54  
55 Q10. [heritage management and conservation]  
56  
57 Q11. Well you'd have to say 'Often' because cultural heritage management in  
58 [state X] under the current act does heavily involve an assessment of  
59 archaeological sites, places and finds as well as the more broader  
60 anthropological issues such as cultural heritage associations. So I would say  
61 'Frequently'.  
62  
63 Q12. Um. I don't know about that. I think the answer would have to be no.  
64  
65 [Does your organisation have a media or PR section?]. Yes.  
66  
67 [Can I clarify – so you personally in your work in dealing with archaeology are  
68 not required to mediate your communications through the media office – or?]  
69  
70 I think that if we need to communicate about cultural heritage management of a  
71 particular issue or a site with stakeholders then we may well communicate  
72 through the media if we want to reach a broader audience. And very often we  
73 want to communicate with specific stakeholders such as Councils or property  
74 owners or developers so we would use the different parts of [my organisation]  
75 that deal with them.  
76  
77 [Can I ask you another question which I didn't put on the questionnaire but it's  
78 coming out as an issue? In terms of the type of heritage that you deal with –  
79 cultural heritage – do you cover all different types of heritage and or do you have  
80 a particular focus on Aboriginal or historical or maritime?]  
81  
82 I think we would focus heavily on Aboriginal and historical heritage with very  
83 little maritime unless we've had some [problems to resolve] somewhere because  
84 of water [laughs..]. We are pretty much a terrestrial...  
85  
86 Q13. Well I was a journalist for [a significant period of time] before I became an  
87 archaeologist and then a cultural heritage manager. So I have practical  
88 experience.  
89  
90 [Tell me about your practical experience of working in journalism..]. Yes I have  
91 experience in working in newspapers and magazines particularly so I'm  
92 experienced in a wide range of editorial activities from gathering news to writing  
93 news to editing and page make-up, editorial management so I did the whole  
94 range of things when I was working for country newspapers basically and I can  
95 write press releases or reports or take photographs or do any of those sort of  
96 activities you might need to do in media management. I've also trained in public  
97 consultation and negotiation through my current employment so I do have lots  
98 of media skills but they tend to cross over into other activities that I do day to

99 day within [my organisation]. So I don't know if I'd call them 'media skills' any  
100 more they are just communication skills.

101  
102 [Does your employer train you on communication?]. Yes. When I was with  
103 [another state government organisation] I did a number of communication and  
104 negotiation training courses. [My current employer] has done some things but  
105 not at a great depth. [My previous employer] was much more focused on training  
106 at that level than [my current employer] was..is at the moment. I'm sure I'll do  
107 more of it.

108  
109 Q15. No. We are pretty much the front line staff here. The Cultural Heritage  
110 section within [my organisation] is pretty much the front line staff for cultural  
111 heritage management. We do have different officers who carry our different  
112 functions but. One of our officers based in [town X] does do cultural heritage  
113 training for the rest of the unit and for other [...] staff but she would train them in  
114 cultural heritage management issues and [company] policies and procedures not  
115 in archaeology as such.

116  
117 Q16-18.  
118 No. Not really in [my current company] and through [where I used to work] all  
119 communication with media was through the media units. I didn't do anything  
120 like that but I certainly had a role in preparing cultural heritage material that  
121 was used by the communication unit as cultural heritage briefings to the media,  
122 but I didn't do any direct work or have any direct connection with those  
123 organisations myself.

124  
125 Q19. I suppose people must forever approach the organisation about issues that  
126 concern them but I don't think that I would deal at this level with questions from  
127 the public about cultural heritage issues. They might go to my manager and  
128 perhaps be dealt with by our cultural heritage liaison officer in [town X] who has  
129 access to our archives but I wouldn't deal with them here. I mean I do get face to  
130 face access with people in the field who ask about cultural heritage and at  
131 meetings and briefings but I don't normally do any direct contact.

132  
133 Q21.  
134 I suppose we.. I guess we are involved in...I guess all our archaeological...  
135 communications about archaeology are probably focused on our role as cultural  
136 heritage managers and how we go about identifying and managing cultural  
137 heritage risk. And we expect, or would like to communicate, news about our  
138 activities and our values to other stakeholders that might be involved with one of  
139 our projects. We don't do .. we do a lot of face to face briefings with contractors  
140 and Councils and with Aboriginal parties and we do talk a lot about cultural  
141 heritage management issues that arise from our projects, and strategies that we  
142 want to develop or risks that we need to manage. But we always do that within  
143 the context of the Aboriginal [heritage legislation] or our policies and  
144 procedures. We don't talk about archaeology or archaeological issues unless they  
145 relate to what we are doing. For instance we were at a cultural heritage  
146 induction at [place X] near [town B] on Tuesday and we had an Aboriginal elder  
147 there explaining to contractors you know the various types of stone material that

148 they might find on site during their clearing and the types of tools that could be  
149 fashioned from them so that they would recognise them. There was direct  
150 communication of archaeological information there, and I followed that up with  
151 a briefing about [my organisation's] cultural heritage policies and practices and  
152 the agreements that we had reached on site with that particular Aboriginal party  
153 before construction began. So you can see there's a difference in role between  
154 Aboriginal parties and organisations such as [my organisation] which is a  
155 cultural heritage manager.

156

157 Q23 (see list for basic yes/no)

158 School students – no we wouldn't unless we were called in to do a briefing  
159 during Education Week or a Careers Day activity. That could happen so I'd put a  
160 yes there.

161

162 uni students – we haven't had any but I'm sure we will or could be as I'm sure we  
163 do have contact with people at various stages of their archaeological training if  
164 they come in for work experience or we happen to be involved in an activity with  
165 which they are interested – an Open Day or some sort of field activity. Yes.

166

167 professionals? yes well we have officers here in [my company] who are  
168 undertaking cultural heritage and archaeological studies at university and they  
169 are not archaeologists. We have a design support officer who is doing that sort of  
170 training at the moment so she's a professional who helps our stream but she's in  
171 a different stream altogether. And there are our environmental staff who are  
172 trained in basic cultural heritage identification and assessment techniques as  
173 well. We do talk to other professional people within [the organisation] about  
174 cultural heritage management

175

176 Non-Aboriginal community organisations? Probably on a case by case basis if we  
177 needed some information about a historical aspect of a project or construction or  
178 land tenure information we may well go to an historical society or to a Council or  
179 to some body within the community with particular knowledge about areas we  
180 might be working in. But again that would be on a case by case basis.

181

182 Volunteers? No we don't really use volunteers.

183

184 Other members of the general public? Yes I deal with the general public quite a  
185 bit but obviously I talk to land holders and to Council staff and to people from  
186 other government departments.

187

188 Tourism or travel businesses? No not really – we do a lot of infrastructure work  
189 for mining companies.

190

191 We are an infrastructure company so we obviously focus at this level on  
192 infrastructure construction and maintenance.

193 Archaeologists working in universities? Not so much – no. I did more so in [the  
194 other government organisation]. Here I haven't. I probably could... would ask an  
195 archaeologist if I needed advice about a particular area in which they had  
196 knowledge or expertise. There's nothing to stop me doing it, I just haven't really

197 done it so far. I've only been with [my current employer] about six to eight  
198 months.  
199  
200 Archaeologists working in museums? No – but then again there is no reason why  
201 we wouldn't – just haven't done that yet.  
202  
203 Other government heritage agencies? Oh yes - we talk to Department of X and Y  
204 and to agency Z and Company A and all those other associated industries quite a  
205 bit.  
206  
207 Archaeological consultants/companies? Yes we engage them from time to time.  
208  
209 Other organisations? I would think not. There's a whole gamut of Aboriginal  
210 bodies out there from cultural heritage bodies to Native Title bodies and all type  
211 of organisation that we do deal with from time to time but I think you've covered  
212 all those.  
213  
214 Q24. I think we would deal with a range of Aboriginal bodies, representative  
215 bodies to cultural heritage bodies to family groups to tribal groups to individuals,  
216 and Native Title holders of course, in our area. And we would have quite a deal of  
217 contact with them. Probably, most of my contact tends to be within [my  
218 organisation] because we are fairly spread out. There's lots of depots and offices  
219 in different places. So I suppose I do spend a lot of time talking to other  
220 [organisation] staff, but then next after that would probably be Aboriginal  
221 groups.  
222  
223 Q25. Well in Organisation X cultural heritage and environmental staff are  
224 employed as [official experts with an appropriate job title] so we are regarded as  
225 – though perhaps somewhat unjustly – as experts in our field whereas we are  
226 probably merely knowledgeable about it. And we are regarded as the primary  
227 resource point for information about all aspects of cultural heritage or  
228 environment. So we are always in that role.  
229  
230 Q26.  
231 My goodness me. Um. That's tricky. I don't know how to answer that, I mean we  
232 always try to reach shared understandings with people from [another agency]  
233 and Department X and [another utility company] and anybody else who is  
234 working and providing infrastructure. Then they have cultural heritage officers  
235 and consultants who we discuss issues with and approaches with and try to  
236 build understandings with about the nature of our activities and our roles or  
237 how we might manage and protect cultural heritage. So yes – I guess the answer  
238 is yes.  
239  
240 Q27.  
241 Oh yes – that happened on Tuesday [laughs..] at the cultural heritage induction  
242 with some Aboriginal elders at [place X] for a project, and our environmental  
243 officer asked a question about some Aboriginal scarred trees and whether or not  
244 the Aboriginal scarred trees ever extended completely to the ground to the base  
245 of the trunk. And the Aboriginal person didn't know the answer. And so, after, to

246 save him some embarrassment, after waiting for a few minutes I suggested that  
247 it was uncommon if not unknown for that to happen and that, you know, that it  
248 probably wasn't a cultural practice to create scarred trees – to cut scars into  
249 scarred trees in that way. And unfortunately my effort wasn't really appreciated  
250 by the Aboriginal person. He got a bit upset about it so. You know I guess I did try  
251 to provide some expert advice in a cultural setting but it was not appreciated.

252

253 Q28.

254 Um. That again is a bit of a moot question. Obviously Organisation X like all other  
255 organisations like to measure the success of its activities and I guess our crude  
256 measure is whether at the end of a project, or during the life of a project we are  
257 complying with agreements that we have made with Aboriginal people, we are  
258 following our policies and processes or whether issues are being identified and  
259 managed during the project. We try to be as subjective as possible about  
260 outcomes but cultural heritage is a bit soft and fuzzy round the edges idea – it's  
261 not a quantifiable discipline and you can't get an exact measure on the  
262 effectiveness of your negotiations or your management strategies except with  
263 the quality of the output if you like. And you try to measure and monitor them as  
264 you go through and assess whether things are going as they should be going –  
265 and you probably do that in academia as well, you have a set of marking criteria  
266 but also probably a set of more informal processes to measure [SC – yes]. But as I  
267 say, I was doing a cultural heritage induction on Tuesday with contractors and I  
268 was deliberately I was trying to explain very simply I guess the cultural heritage  
269 values to look for, and the fact that people – you know contractors – under the  
270 [state legislation for Aboriginal heritage] everybody has a legal and a financial  
271 responsibility to manage cultural heritage from the CEO of Organisation X down  
272 to the contractor in the field so therefore it was in everybody's interest to take an  
273 active interest in cultural heritage management. And I thought I'd got and I'd  
274 kept my sentences short and my thoughts fairly simple and straight forward and  
275 I thought I'd managed to get through, make my talk fairly interesting and get  
276 through. But having spoken to (the contractors) our environmental officer this  
277 morning he said 'Ah a couple of those fellows what you were saying was just  
278 going straight over their heads you know'. And I thought oh – good grief – you  
279 know [laughs]. I couldn't have made it any simpler. That was a crude measure of  
280 inefficiency, ineffectiveness but I really don't know how to improve it.

281

282 Q30 (beyond word processing or basic emails). I suppose if you want to be broad  
283 approach in the field we use digital GPS technologies to survey our line routes, to  
284 record cultural heritage sites and data within the field and once we've collected  
285 that data it's placed into a GIS called Smallworld which then displays the data  
286 graphically. So that anybody within the organisation that has need of that  
287 information can access it so. Basically what I'm saying is we have lots of layers  
288 within Google Earth and within Smallworld some of which have environmental  
289 information, some of which have cultural heritage sites, some of which have  
290 Indigenous material, some of which display historical data. And people can  
291 access that data at the level they want to.

292

293 We use GIS technology to communicate within the organisation and with other  
294 stakeholders about cultural heritage values and within our line route accesses.  
295 That's probably the best example of digital technology and the way we use it.  
296

297 [SC. Can I ask you a basic question about that – if you wished to show a  
298 community meeting something like that – do you have do you take that along on  
299 a computer or do you download a thing into PowerPoint or?]  
300

301 Depending on the size of the meeting and the function I would perhaps take my  
302 laptop and a digital projector and project slides from my laptop onto a screen  
303 along with other data – showing maps and images and data. Or I may just take  
304 along some paper based information and hand out pictures and maps about the  
305 areas we are working in. It really depends on your audience and what you want  
306 to achieve. Some audiences need – are happy enough with – an audiovisual  
307 presentation. Some audiences probably need more permanent forms of  
308 information just maps or charts to take away with them to include in their plans.  
309 Some organisations, particularly Aboriginal organisations, need aural material  
310 and wouldn't, probably don't relate terribly well to audiovisual material perhaps  
311 because it's just presented in a way they don't normally communicate.  
312

313 I keep going back to my illustration on Tuesday, the Aboriginal elder who was  
314 doing my induction brought along some artefacts and he had some photographs  
315 of sites and typical sorts of things you'd find on sites which he passed around to  
316 the contractors and they talked about the different features of the artefacts and  
317 he sort of had that technology – he had that approach well organised and he was  
318 able to communicate his thoughts quite well. But he kept saying to me  
319 afterwards "Ah I've got this new PowerPoint presentation, I'm going to do a  
320 PowerPoint presentation and every time I go out." And he loved the idea but he  
321 didn't quite know how to use it and he hadn't got the technology together to use  
322 it yet. And I could see that it wasn't really going to work well with the way he  
323 was discoursing unless he could make it work for him. He seemed to think he  
324 could put up slides and people would read the slides and he would just talk to  
325 the slides and the PowerPoint would take over if you like and become the  
326 medium. And I actually thought the way he was doing it now was quite effective  
327 for small groups. You see he's trying to move into a form of technology that offers  
328 some benefits but you have to make it work for him to continue to be effective  
329 and I'm not sure he'd got to that point yet.  
330

331 Q32.

332 My organisation is using them a lot more internally and to communicate with the  
333 public but I don't. I actually – I'm finding actually that with Aboriginal groups  
334 they try to use these media but they don't use them effectively enough yet and  
335 they're somewhat unreliable. It's really – I tend to avoid them as a method of  
336 communication. I'd rather send them a letter in the mail or ring them up or go  
337 and see them because trying to communicate cultural heritage information via  
338 words, via a truncated Twitter message or even an email message you lose so  
339 much of the meaning and you lose the interaction that's important when you're  
340 talking to someone even over the phone. So I'm a bit of a Luddite about these  
341 things. I think they are good in their place but I try not to use them even if they

342 are available because I don't think they communicate. It's easy not to  
343 communicate or to leave the meeting with misunderstandings or to send a  
344 message and there appear to be misunderstandings at the other end because you  
345 may not have expressed in writing what you wanted to express, or you could  
346 have expressed more easily just by talking about it and getting feedback and  
347 interacting with the other person. Just to share ideas and knowledge.

348

349 Q33/34

350 I find some forms of digital technology particularly helpful such as the ability to  
351 geo cache your photos in Google Earth and refer back to them. Obviously digital  
352 technologies such as computers are great for storing information and accessing it  
353 and being able to distribute it but I guess I see them as having their limits as  
354 useful tools. They are just that and I'm a bit wary about getting too involved in  
355 things, getting too dependent on them. It's bad enough already I mean I sit in an  
356 office in [town X] and I've got an officer at [small town several 100 km away] and  
357 we might talk once every three months. We send messages back and forwards  
358 which is helpful but it's not really communication to me. It's just a medium of  
359 exchange in some ways.

360

361 Q35. Below Average to Average. I think there's a bit of consumer resistance in it  
362 all. I do my best but..

363

364 Q36. (ICT support)

365 I think its outsourced – everything's outsourced here. So we have an  
366 organisation that's contracted to provide IT support and they normally do a  
367 fairly good job, but it's – yes we do have an outsourced organisation that handles  
368 our IT needs.

369

370 Q37. No. I think you'll probably find that the people you interview will take the  
371 questions about archaeology and probably try to expand them to their own  
372 experience and fields and when you say 'archaeology' they will think oh yes  
373 cultural heritage management, Native Title management, archaeological  
374 consultancy, Native Title legislation or something like that. There's very few of  
375 them unless they are actually carrying out traditional archaeological activities  
376 will fit neatly into an archaeological mould. They'll all sort of spill over into other  
377 areas.