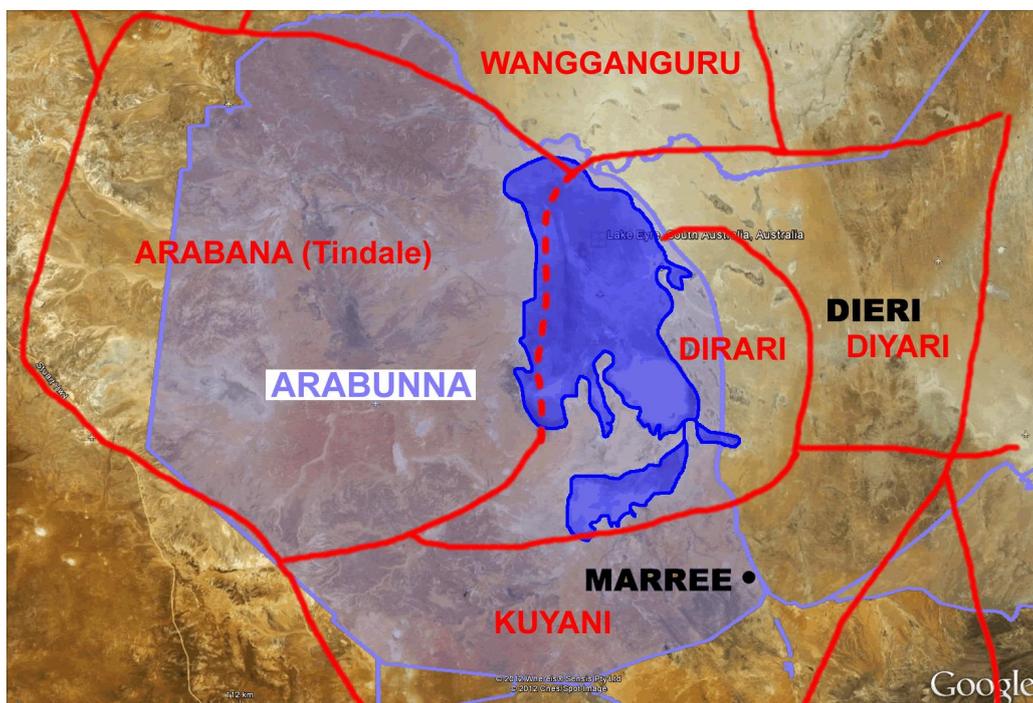


Q. I've heard that the Arabunna are not the traditional owners of Lake Eyre

The fact that the Arabunna are not the traditional owners of Lake Eyre is well known amongst past and present anthropologists/linguists, missionaries and most “locals” of FNSA. The Native Title decision took many by surprise including other groups who had laid claim to their side of Lake Eyre and the area to the south of Lake Eyre. The Marree Arabunna, an autonomous entity, were forced to go to court to excise the town from the greater Arabunna claim. Even as recently as September 2013, after the Native Title decision, every Arabunna member who spoke at a Lake Eyre Basin conference described their traditional country as being to the west of Lake Eyre. This article presents the evidence to support our claim that significant corruption has occurred within the Native Title Committee and the South Australian Government. The reasons why this occurred are given in a separate article.

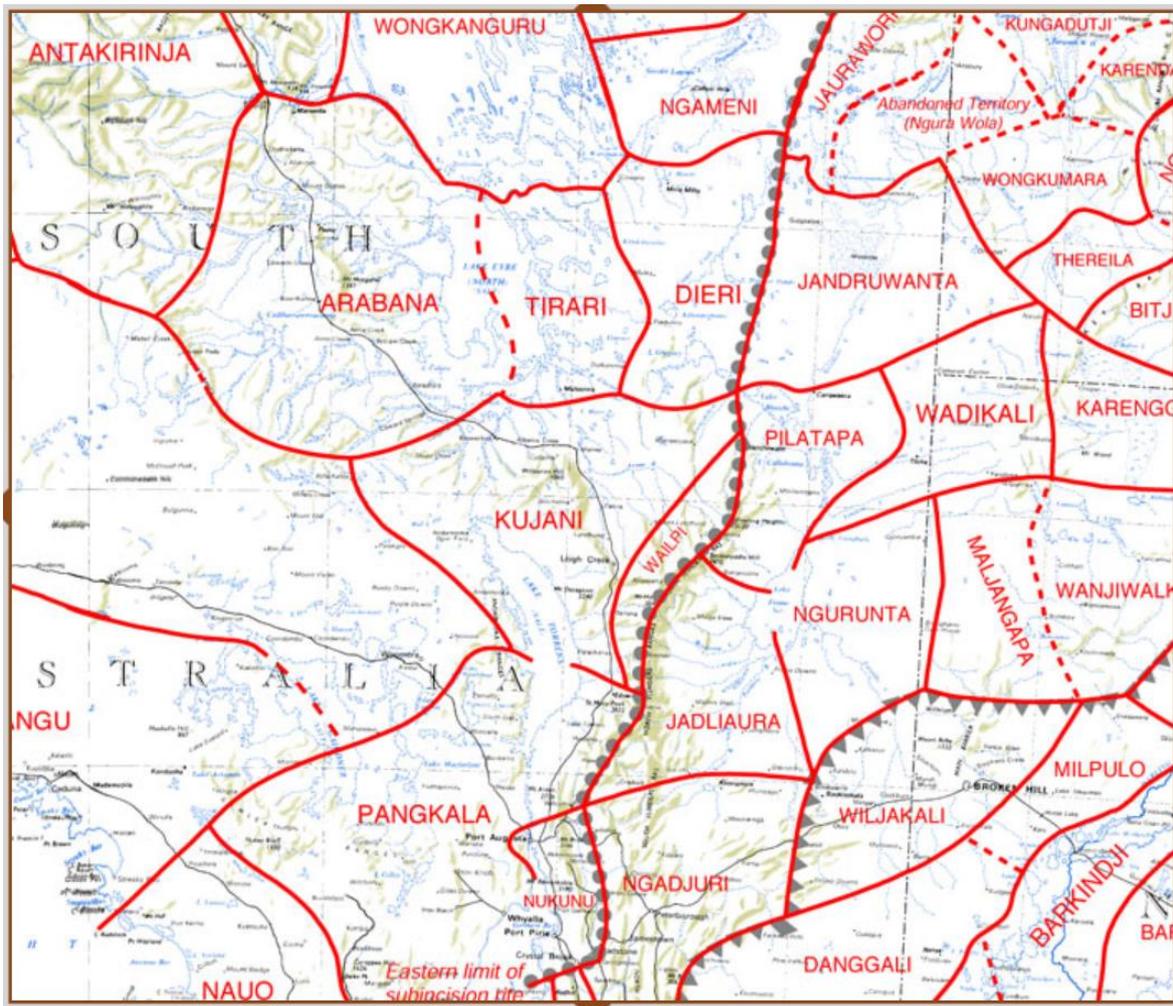


Early c1940 Tindale map with 2011 Native Title decision overlaid in purple.

The area encircled in red to the west of Lake Eyre is Arabunna Country as shown on an early map produced by Tindale, the most eminent South Australian anthropologist, working for the South Australian Museum. The area shaded purple is the land as per the Arabunna Native Title decision. Most Australians agree that Native Title is based on occupation at the time of European Colonisation. This is the closest evidence available for that time.

The next map is dated 1974 and has minor boundary and spelling changes and is followed by a description of Arabunna country. This information is reproduced from NB Tindale's *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia* (1974). Please be aware that much of the data relating to Aboriginal language group distribution and definition has undergone revision since 1974.

Please note also that this catalogue represents Tindale's attempt to depict Aboriginal tribal distribution at the time of European contact.



Tindale 1974 http://archives.samuseum.sa.gov.au/tribalmmap/html/map_L3_C4_D4.html

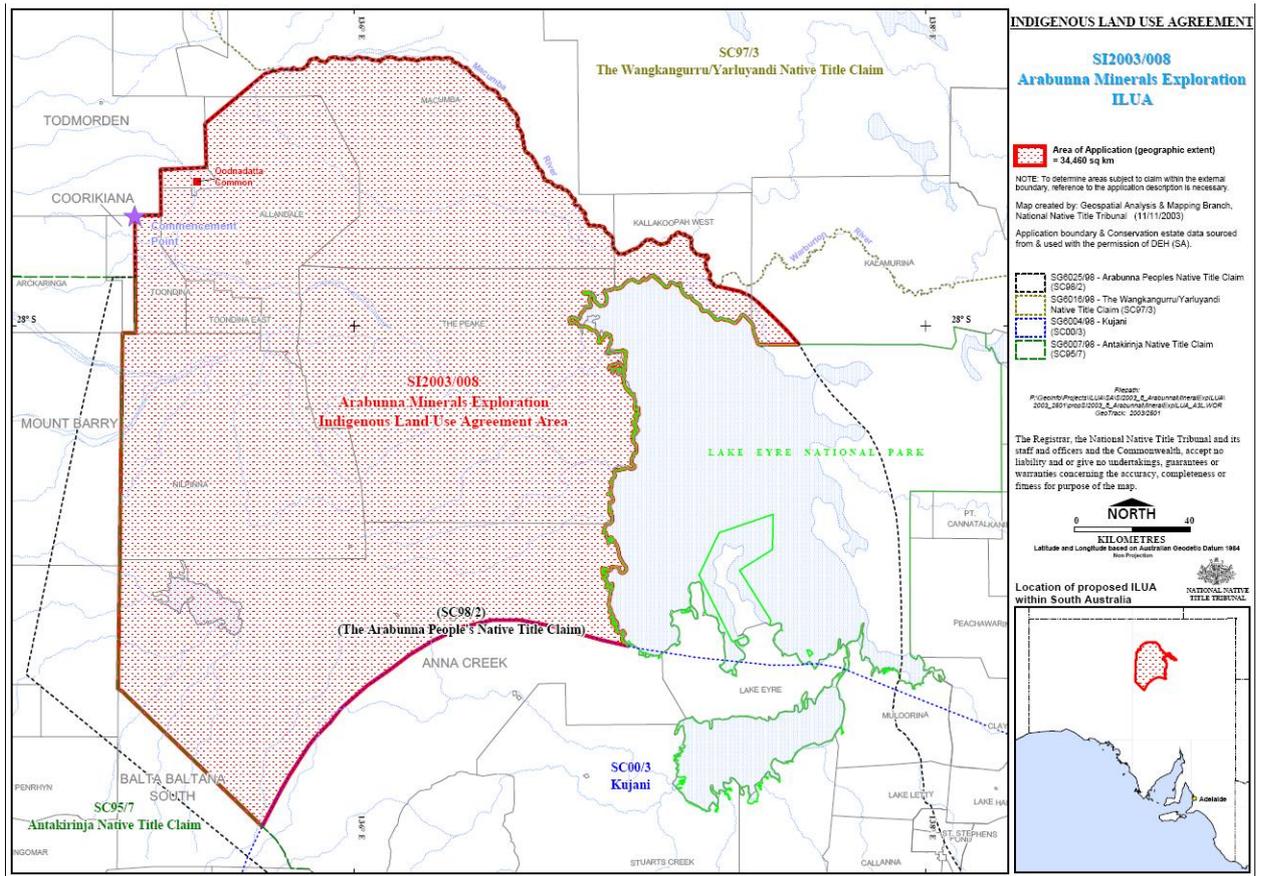
Arabana (SA)

Location: Neales River on the west side of Lake Eyre west to Stuart Range; Macumba Creek south to Coward Springs; at Oodnadatta, Lora Creek, Lake Cadibarrawirracanna, and the Peake. Their boundary with the Kokata on the west is marked by the margin of the scarp of the western tableland near Coober Pedy. There were hordal groupings and their term for a hordal territory was ['wadlu]; this has been mistaken for a tribal name. While Arabana today is the accepted term, I was informed by O. Siebert that Ngarabana is a better name; some earlier recorders were unable to write or hear initial sounds. Aborigines accept Arabana but admit their grandparents would have preferred Ngarabana.

Co-ordinates: 136°0'E x 28°30'S

Area: 19,500 sq. m. (50,700 sq. km)

References: Taplin, 1879; East, 1889; Helms, 1896; Spencer and Gillen, 1900, 1904; Mathews, 1900 (Gr. 6448); Bruce, 1902; Howitt, 1904; Howitt and Siebert, 1904; Parker, 1905; Eylmann, 1908; Strehlow, 1910; Spencer, 1912; Bates, 1918; Basedow, 1925; Elkin, 1931, 1940; Siebert, personal comm. 1936; Tindale in Fenner, 1936; Tindale, 1940; Wakerley in Berndt, 1941; Yallop, 1969.



Above: Map created in 2003 showing Arabunna ILUA and mostly agreeing with Tindale as to locating Arabunna country



Above: Extract from the Indigenous Language Map (1996)

David R Horton is the creator of the Indigenous Language Map. This map is based on language data gathered by Aboriginal Studies Press, AIATSIS and Auslig/Sinclair, Knight, Merz, (1996). The map attempts to represent all of the language or tribal or nation groups of Indigenous people of Australia. This map is often used by government departments and was most recently seen at the Lake Eyre Basin meeting in September 2013

- http://www.abc.net.au/indigenous/map/images/indigi_map.png
- Owner: ABC

Comment:

Isn't it interesting how Native Title has been redefined? The Native Title Tribunal lists most of these maps in its bibliography of references used to make its decision. The Tribunal's answer when questioned as to their decision – "the government didn't raise any objections". It is amazing how mining companies can influence government decision making.

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