

Dr Carl Hughes - Biographical Details (especially Aboriginal Deaths-in-Custody work)

After leaving Military Medicine, and General Practice in 1987, Dr Carl Hughes set up a "Forensic Consultancy", initially based in Sydney. This "Forensic" consultancy work involved **intensive investigation of the medical aspects of cases involving the Law.**

In practice, this meant the "case-load" of Forensic work fell into two classes:

1. **Civilian "Medico-legal" cases**, usually "Medical Mistakes" (such as a failure to diagnose, incorrect medications and surgical errors etc.)
2. **Criminal Cases***. Cases involved assisting Legal teams where the client was charged with serious crimes such as Murder & Serious Assault etc. (This work often required attending Post-Mortem examinations and gathering systematic, photograph evidence of patterns of injuries, bruising, fractures, lacerations etc.)

ABORIGINAL DEATHS-IN- CUSTODY CASES

During the 1980's and 1990's, a number of very significant events occurred in Aboriginal History in Australia which related to "Deaths-in-Custody", for example:

1981 The death of "Eddie Murray" in the Wee Waa Police 'Lock-up

1983 The death of teenager John Pat in Roebourne (after an assault by Police)

1987 The death of Lloyd Boney in the Brewarrina Police Lock-up.

1987 The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths-in-Custody was announced by The Prime Minister, Bob Hawke (just four days after Lloyd Boney's death).

With such a "background history" of importance to Aboriginal History, it is not surprising that the various "Watch Committees" (set up to monitor Aboriginal Deaths-in Custody following the Royal Commission and its Recommendations) turned to a ('private') Forensic Consultancy for assistance,

The "Watch" Committee in Sydney, and later, the "Indigenous Social Justice Association" founded by the Late Uncle Ray Jackson, approached Dr Hughes for assistance in the investigation of many Aboriginal 'deaths-in-custody'.

In 1992, the Western Australian "Watch" Committee was set up in Perth in response to the Recommendations of the Royal Commission. This Committee also asked Dr Hughes for assistance in the investigation of W.A. deaths-in-custody in Perth and rural W.A.

For over 30 years, Dr Hughes, working very closely with the various "Watch" Committees and Aboriginal Legal Services, has been actively involved in the investigation where Aboriginals have died "in custody" in every State and Territory of Australia.

Of these 100's of cases, many were very well known, such as the death of "T.J." Hickey in Redfern (2004) and the death of Cameron Doomadgee in Palm Island "Lock-up" (2004).