

Civil Constructional Corps records held in Perth

The need for labour in wartime

One of the most pressing demands on Australia during World War II was for the construction of infrastructure and communications works, such as port facilities, aerodromes, fuel depots, roads and bridges. Commonwealth expenditure on works increased from £2 million in the year preceding the outbreak of war to £32 million in 1941–42.

In February 1942 the Allied Works Council (CA 497) was created to take responsibility for carrying out all works required for war purposes by the Allied forces in Australia. Edward Granville Theodore, a former Premier of Queensland (1919–25) and Federal Treasurer (1929–31) was appointed Director-General of the Council.

Establishment of the Civil Constructional Corps

The major difficulty faced by the Allied Works Council was the supply of labour. In March 1942 the War Cabinet accepted a recommendation from Theodore for the creation of a Civil Constructional Corps (CCC), which would undertake war-related construction projects within Australia.

The Corps was formed as a civilian rather than military organisation and comprised volunteers and persons called up under military impressment. Given the wartime climate and the range of powers given to the Director-General, the Corps operated under a more rigid discipline than would be normal industrial practice. While members' pay was based on civilian award rates, they could not refuse work and were subject to regulations governing their conduct on the job and to the orders of the Director-General for maintaining good order at works or in camps.

By June 1943 some 66,000 men had sought enrolment in the Corps of whom 53,500 were selected as medically fit and suitable. Of these, 8500 had volunteered, 28,000 had already been working on Allied Works Council jobs at the time of enrolment and about 17,000 had been called up for service. Most were over 35 years of age. The major occupational categories were labourers, carpenters and truck drivers.

Members of the Corps were sent to all parts of Australia to work on projects such as docks, aerodromes, roads, gun emplacements, hospitals, fuel storage depots, pipelines and factories.

Records of the Civil Constructional Corps held in Perth

The Perth office holds a range of records of the Allied Works Council, Western Australian Office (CA 8132). Many of these contain information about members of the Civil Constructional Corps in Western Australia. Details of records are listed below.

Collection references

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Correspondence records Most of these contain information about members of the CCC or the Civil Aliens Corps in Western Australia and the sorts of projects they were undertaking.</u>	1942–45	K1192
<u>Register of members of Civil Constructional Corps – Western Australia Information held comprises name, address and registration number</u>	1942–45	K1193
<u>Nominal index cards – Civil Constructional Corps Information held includes name, age and date enrolled and discharged</u>	1942–45	K1194
<u>Personal Record Cards – Civil Constructional Corps Information held includes name, address, date of birth, medical details and occupation</u>	1942–45	K1195
<u>Personal files of members of the Civil Constructional Corps enlisted in Western Australia Information held includes enrolment and discharge papers, medical details and leave arrangements</u>	1942–45	K1291

How to find more records

As members of the Civil Constructional Corps sometimes moved interstate, you may find it necessary to consult records held in more than one office of the National Archives.

Civilian Service Medal, 1939–45

If you served with the Civil Constructional Corps during World War II, or any of the organisations that undertook war works for the Allied Works Council you may be eligible for the Civilian Service Medal 1939–45. For further information please see *Fact sheet 39 - Civilian Service in World War II*.

Other information about the Allied Works Council in Western Australia

- *Fact sheet 182 - Civil Aliens Corps records held in Perth*