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B.Sc. Hon. (Geography)

**An Analysis of the Winter Movement of Grey Nomads to Northern Australia:  
Planning for Increase Senior Visitation**

Doctor of Philosophy

James Cook University  
School of Earth and Environment Science

14<sup>th</sup> February 2008

Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Science,  
Engineering and Information Technology of James Cook University.

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## THE GREY NOMADS

*They have kissed grandchildren fondly and shaken workmates  
hands,*

*Put their furniture in storage after months of making plans,  
Farewelled the familiar to obey their hearts commands,  
New Age overlanders in cars and caravans.*

*A siren song has called them, ancient spirit of this land,  
Rainforest, river, mountain, silver saltbush, rocks, red sand,  
Soft voice of distant Dreamtime bids them see and  
understand,*

*No winter, always summer in a wandering caravan.*

*They have learned more of each other since this long journey  
began,*

*Discussion flowing freely over sink and frying pan,  
Life is meant for living, they'll enjoy it while they can,  
Time no longer rules them - their home a caravan.*

*A postcard from the Alice, photos, smiling tanned,  
They won't be home for Christmas as previously planned,  
The road rises before them, a mesmerising strand,  
Grey nomads follow rainbows in dusty caravans.*

(Anonymous)

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### **Statement on the Contribution of Others Including Financial and Editorial Help**

The research received ethical clearance from the James Cook University's Ethics Review Committee (Approval Number: H1903). A copy of this approval is included as Appendix A. The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted within the guidelines for research ethics outlined in the National Statement on Ethics Conduct in Research Involving Humans, the Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and guidelines on Research Practice, the James Cook University Policy on Experimentation Ethics, Standard Practices and Guidelines, and the James Cook University Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice.

## Abstract

Australia has an ageing population. The majority of Australia's senior population are healthier and more financially secure than past aged generations. Furthermore, never before in Australia's modern history have so many senior citizens had the opportunity and the ability to move freely across Australia with relative ease. Each year, tens of thousands of retired Australians leave their permanent residence with the onset of winter and relocate to destinations in northern Australia. These mobile retirees are better known as grey nomads, and are a valuable niche group for the Australia's self-drive tourism market.

In the population geography literature, much has been written regarding the mobility of retirees in developed countries. Most of the analysis on Australia's senior mobility has focused on aspects of permanent movement, the so-called 'sea change' phenomenon. Research into the temporary movement of seniors, moving from a cold climate to warmer environment has focused primarily on the North American snowbird population. Recently, however, some attention has been given to researching the seasonal winter movements of retirees in Australia. The majority of studies examined grey nomads from a tourism prospective, generally as a segment within the self-drive and/or grey tourism markets. A few population geography studies have focused on motivation to travel and demographic characteristics, identifying differences between grey nomads and the snowbird population or differences between permanently retired residents, residing at the same destinations visited by grey nomads. No research has been undertaken examining grey nomad mobility, especially in the Northern Territory and Western Australia. Furthermore, most studies have examined grey nomads within a caravan park setting, omitting those grey nomads who camp, and has treated them as a homogenous population. Research by Mings (1997) identified that grey nomads are very individualistic; hence, this high level of individualism would lead to the assumption that grey nomads are not a homogeneous population.

The aim of this project was to identify if grey nomads were a homogenous population and to examine their mobility and factors influencing their movement patterns. Results from this study concluded that grey nomads are not a homogenous population in relation to mobility and destination choice. Factors such as number of past trips undertaken, past visits to a particular place, age, vehicle, economic and health status, activities undertaken whilst travelling, and time in retirement all influenced the level of a grey nomad's mobility and the destinations they choose to visit. Rarely will one factor influence a grey nomad's mobility; generally, numerous factors will contribute. Therefore, grey nomads can be divided into six sub-populations based on varying mobility, socio-economic/demographic characteristics and other factors such as the level of social interaction with other grey nomads. Furthermore, a longitudinal typology also exists identifying a change in a grey nomad's movement and choice of destination throughout their grey nomadic lifespan. In addition, an examination of the highway and road networks grey nomads used provided information on the movement patterns of grey nomads from separate states and territories. Results presented in this thesis will aid planners in their efforts to provide sufficient services and infrastructure at destinations catering to seasonal influxes of grey nomad visitors.

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SC  
14<sup>th</sup> February 2008

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## **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

### **1:1. Introduction**

Human mobility, the movement of humans from one spatial unit to another (i.e. migration or temporary movement), has seen a coming together of different cultures (albeit to the detriment of some), the development of trade and trading routes, and a sharing of knowledge. Furthermore, these factors have produced changes in the geographical landscape (e.g. agriculture, urbanisation and industrialisation) and the establishment of geopolitical boundaries. Geographers since the mid-nineteenth century have studied the varying types and patterns of human mobility (i.e. forced or voluntary). Endeavouring to understand the underlining characteristics that drive humans to move from one location to another can provide valuable insights into the human mind and help comprehend the development of humanity in its entirety. In an ever changing world, investigations into past and current forms of human movement may aid in comprehending possible future patterns and the implications of the movement of people from one location to another.

The focus of this thesis is an examination of the temporary/circular movement of Australian seniors (i.e. retirees) to northern Australia during the southern hemisphere's winter. This movement usually commences with the onset of cool weather in southern Australia and gravitates towards the warmer climate of northern Australia, with many returning to their point of departure sometime during spring or early summer. These aged travellers move vast distances across Australia for a period of three-to-four months or longer (Mings, 1997; Onyx and Leonard, 2005). These independent self-drive individuals in caravans, motor homes, campervans and camping trailers are often referred to as 'grey nomads' (Westh, 2001) or 'sundowners' (Tourism Australia, 2004), as many of the retiring baby boomers prefer to be called, rejecting the label of elderly or grey.

The primary aim of this thesis is to examine population characteristics of grey nomads (e.g. age, retirement scheme, pre-retirement employment) and their movement across northern Australia. First and foremost, this project will determine if grey nomads are a homogenous population, examining if any socio-economic/demographic differences exist within the population and how these differences may influence mobility and destination choice. A second component of this study identified separate grey nomad sub-populations based on differences in socio-economic/demographic characteristics and mobility levels. The last component involved in this study is the creation of a longitudinal mobility matrix that highlights the possible mechanisms that may promote changes in a grey nomad's mobility through different stages of their travelling life-cycle. In other words, how does their mobility change from their first extended winter trip north to a stage where they have taken numerous extended winter trips? Knowledge of the different sub-populations of grey nomads and their variation in mobility will help identify which destinations attract particular types of grey nomads, now and possibly in the future. Knowing which destinations certain grey nomads (i.e. young/old; short-stay/long-stay; well travelled/inexperienced grey nomads) are visiting will enable planners to provide suitable facilities and services to cater for these temporary visitors. In addition, understanding current trends in grey nomad mobility patterns may help to identify possible future trends as the current population of grey nomads begin to age and undertake more extended winter journeys.

## **1:2. Background**

Australia has an ageing population (Kippen, 2003). Presently, there are almost three million Australians aged 60 years and over. The Australian Bureau of Statistics predicts that by 2051 the number of Australians over the age of 65 years will double (see Figure 1.1). In 2004, thirteen per cent of Australia's population was aged 65 years and over (Australian Bureau Statistics (hereafter ABS), 2005a). ABS (2006b) estimated that Australia's aged population is likely to increase to between 26 and 28 per cent by 2051

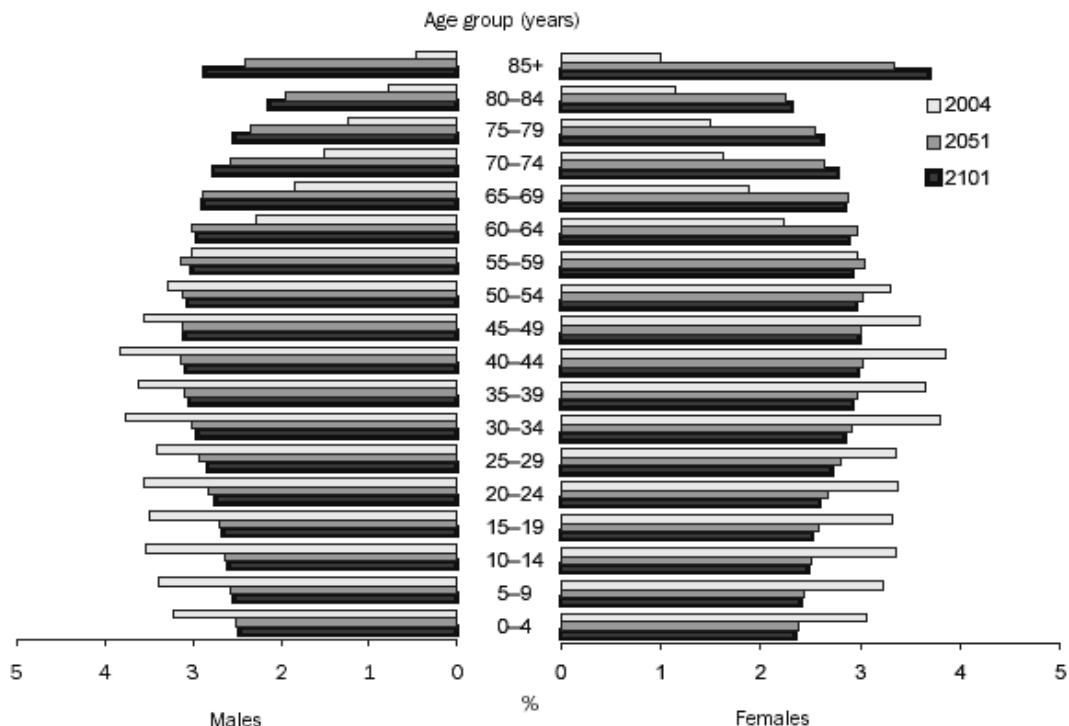


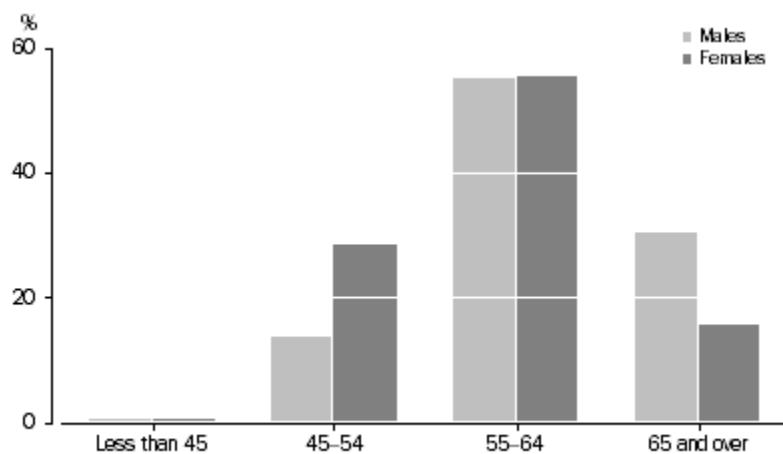
Figure 1.1. Age structure of the Australian population in 2004 and the projections for 2051 and 2101.

(Source: ABS, 2006b)

and to reach somewhere between 26 and 31 per cent by 2101. The bulk of the increase will be felt just prior to 2011 as the ‘baby boomer’ generation (those born 1946 to 1964) age. During this time, approximately 98 000 Australians will join the ranks of Australia’s elderly each year (ABS, 1994).

Australia’s elderly are more financially secure and in better health than previous aged generations (McCormack, 1997). These factors, plus an increase in leisure time that retirement brings and improvements in transport and communication networks, have seen the development of an environment conducive to extended self-drive seasonal movement (Carson and Waller, 2002). As a result, mobility levels amongst Australia’s elderly have reached an all time high. With an increase in financial security, which superannuation and retirement schemes provide, more Australians are choosing to enter retirement or go into semi-retirement at an early age, prior to reaching the official retirement age for males of 65 years and females between 60 years and 65 years, dependant on time of birth (Hourigan and Associates, 2006). ABS (2007a) estimated that the average age for an Australian at retirement is 62 years old. One of the main contributing factors to the lower mean age of Australian retirees (younger than 65 years) stems from their eligibility to access superannuation retirement funds once they reach the age of 55 years (see Figure 1.2). Undoubtedly this increase in leisure time, in addition to the improved financial and health status of Australia’s aged population, will see the volume of movement amongst aged Australia’s increase in the short term (i.e. next ten years). This increase may continue longer, assuming that external factors like increasing travel costs, overcrowding at destinations and changes in Australia’s economy do not impede the desire to undertake such movements.

The needs of elderly Australians are different compared to the younger members of the community. Thus, the youth of Australia or those individuals of working age (i.e. 15-65 years) place different demands on services compared to their older counterparts. The elderly can place greater demand on medical and aged care facilities than younger demographics within the community. In contrast, youth and younger adults utilise educational facilities in larger numbers than the aged. Therefore, planners need to



*Figure 1.2. The ages of Australians who have retired in the last five years.*

(Source: ABS, 2007a)

have a thorough understanding of the demography of a region, both its permanent and temporary populations. Planners generally obtain information on a region's demographics from census data. However, census data does not take into account seasonal fluctuations in regional populations and does not address issues relating to differences in an individual's mobility, whether they are staying at their present location for one night or longer. Research into the nature of seasonal elderly travellers (i.e. length of stay, destination choice and routes taken) needs to be conducted to lessen any undesirable implications, especially for host communities that are frequently visited and may be unprepared for a seasonal increase in the number of aged residents.

The majority of studies into elderly mobility in Australia have focused primarily on permanent migration. However, over the last 30 years circular/seasonal mobility has gained favour amongst Australia's elderly (Caravan Industry Australia (hereafter CIA), 2004). The bulk of this type of mobility usually occurs during the Australian winter, when large numbers of retirees from southern Australia move temporarily to locations across northern Australia seeking a warmer more favourable climate. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, seasonal elderly movers (i.e. grey nomads) in Australia have contributed approximately \$2 billion to Australia's domestic economy each year. Moreover, they are the fastest growing sector in Australia's domestic tourism, growing at a rate of approximately fifteen per cent each year (Tourism Queensland, 2003), thereby making them a valuable niche market. Yet, there has been limited research into Australian grey nomads. Little is known about the movement patterns of Australian grey nomads across northern Australia and how age, the spatial distribution of destinations (i.e. destinations in the Northern Territory and Western Australia are fewer and further apart compared to Queensland), and the number of repeat visits to a region influences the choice of destinations or alters mobility levels. In contrast, seasonal elderly movers in North America (i.e. snowbirds) have been extensively studied. Furthermore, there is an abundance of literature regarding the seasonal movement of the elderly within Europe.

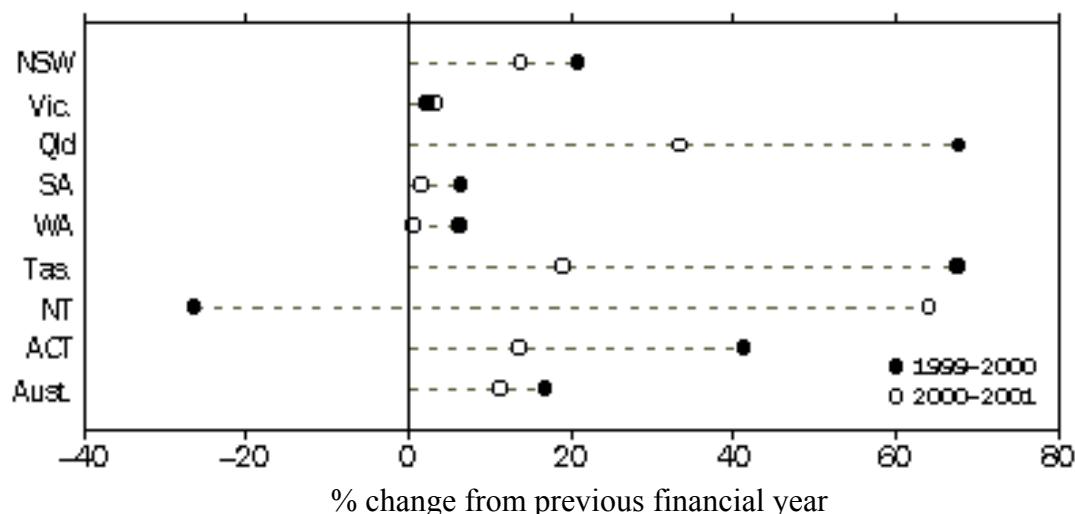
Gauging the exact number of Australia's grey nomads is problematic. Census data fails to distinguish these seasonal travellers from other temporary movers of similar demographics. For example, data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics

reported that over a 100 000 Australians aged 55 years and over from other states and territories were residing in Queensland on the 2006 Census night. In addition, the Local Government Area of Mareeba (Far North Queensland) and the Urban Centre of Broome (Western Australia) had 5 285 and 4 680 Australians aged 55 years and over, respectively, residing in the area on the 2006 Census night. Of this population, 228 and 3 231 individuals, respectively, reported having their place of usual residence in another area in Australia (ABS, 2007a). The proportion of grey nomads in this population compared to other aged Australians on short holidays (e.g. a week) or visiting family and friends was not clearly identified. Furthermore, Australian statistical and government organisations have different classifications for an aged person, further complicating identification of the grey nomad population. Australians can receive a Seniors Card upon reaching 60 years. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (1996) and the Tourism Australia (formally known as the Bureau of Tourism Research, hereafter TA) (2000) classify any Australians over 65 years as being elderly. Identification of seasonal senior travellers is made even more difficult because Australians are able to access their superannuation upon reaching 55 years of age (Prideaux, 2002). Accessing superannuation at an earlier age has allowed many Australians under the age of 65 years to retire and join the ranks of the grey nomads. Therefore, identifying grey nomads using TA and ABS data or utilising the list of elderly Australians with Senior Cards will not identify the younger grey nomads under the age of 60 years. However, CIA estimated that throughout the early 2000s in excess of 350 000 caravans, motor homes, camper vans and camper trailers were touring around Australia each year (CIA, cited in Tourism Queensland, 2003). CIA (2002) estimated that over 280 000 of the 350 000 caravan moving around Australia were driven by retirees. Carter (2002) stated that approximately 200 000 of these trips made by caravanning retirees have a duration greater than six weeks. This figure only accounts for retirees towing a caravan and excluded retirees in a motor home or other forms of self-drive vehicles such as camper vans and camper trailers. Assuming that most caravans and motor homes carry two occupants, 400 000 to 500 000 grey nomads could be wandering around Australia during the winter months each year, equating to approximately two per cent of Australia's population.

With the number of Australian elderly expected to increase, it is reasonable to assume that there will be a significant increase in grey nomad numbers. A special

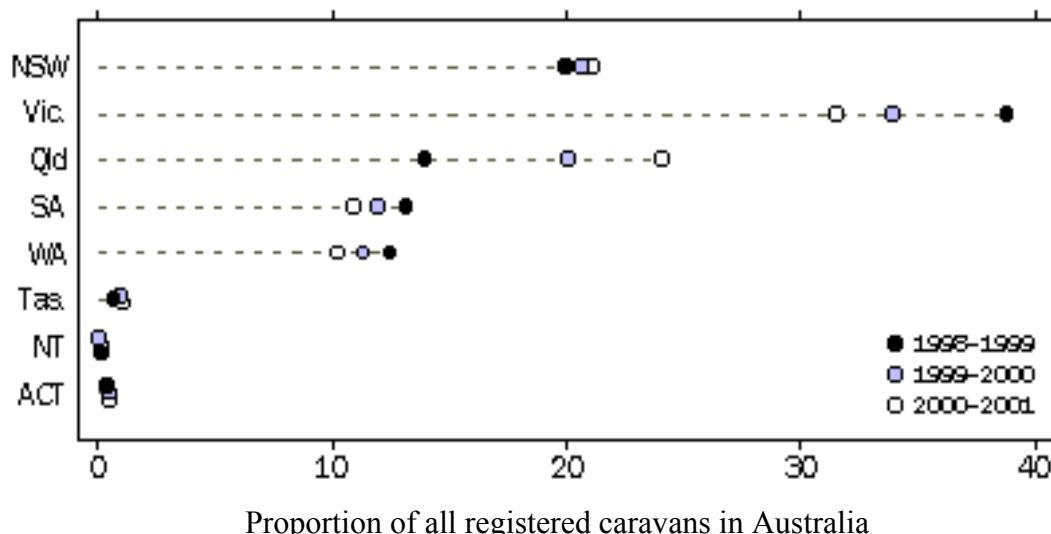
feature article on new caravan registrations in the ABS's *Year Book Australia, 2002*, indicated that from 1993 to 2001 there had been a substantial growth in the number of new caravans registered in Australia. During the period from 1998 to 2001, the number of new caravan registrations increased by 30 per cent (ABS, 2002b). Furthermore, over the last five years new caravan sales have continued to increase by fourteen per cent (Baldwin, 2006). The majority of new caravans are being purchased by those Australians who are retired or approaching retirement (CIA, 2002). The state with the greatest percentage increase in caravan sales between the years 1999-2001 is Queensland (see Figure 1.3). In 2000-2001, Victoria had the greatest number of registered caravans followed by Queensland with New South Wales having the third largest total (see Figure 1.4). These figures suggest that the bulk of grey nomads across northern Australia would originate from these states. Research has shown that grey nomad numbers to north east Queensland are primarily made up of grey nomads from Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland (Mings, 1997; Cridland, 2003). Movement within Western Australia and the Northern Territory has not been closely examined. However, a study by Mings (1989) of snowbird movement in North America suggested a strong longitudinal north – south (vice versa) movement as opposed to an east – west (vice versa) movement. Hence, movement into or within Western Australia and the Northern Territory may indicate a strong presence of grey nomads from South Australia and Western Australia. This hypothesis had not been completely examined before this study.

A major problem may be looming for the caravanning and related industries in the near future. Data from the ABS (2002c) indicated that between September 1997 and September 2000, caravan site availability fell by 3.5 per cent. These losses have continued, with the number of sites in caravan parks across Australia falling from 206 475 in June 2006 to 203 798 in June 2007: a loss of almost 6 000 sites (ABS, 2007b). In addition, the numbers of powered and non-powered sites in caravan parks decreased by 6 per cent during this period. Most of these losses have been offset by an increase in cabin accommodation in caravan parks. From 1997 to 2000, cabin numbers within caravan parks increased by 41 per cent (ABS, 2002c) (See Figure 1.5). This increase in cabin numbers has contributed to a \$154.9 million or 28 per cent increase in caravan park takings over the same period. The majority of this increase is occurring in the Northern Territory, where cabin numbers have increased



*Figure 1.3. The number of new caravans registered in Australian states and territories, in 1990-2000 and 2000-2001.*

(Source: ABS, 2002a)



*Figure 1.4. The total of all caravans registered in Australian states and territories, 1998 to 2001.*

(Source: ABS, 2002a)

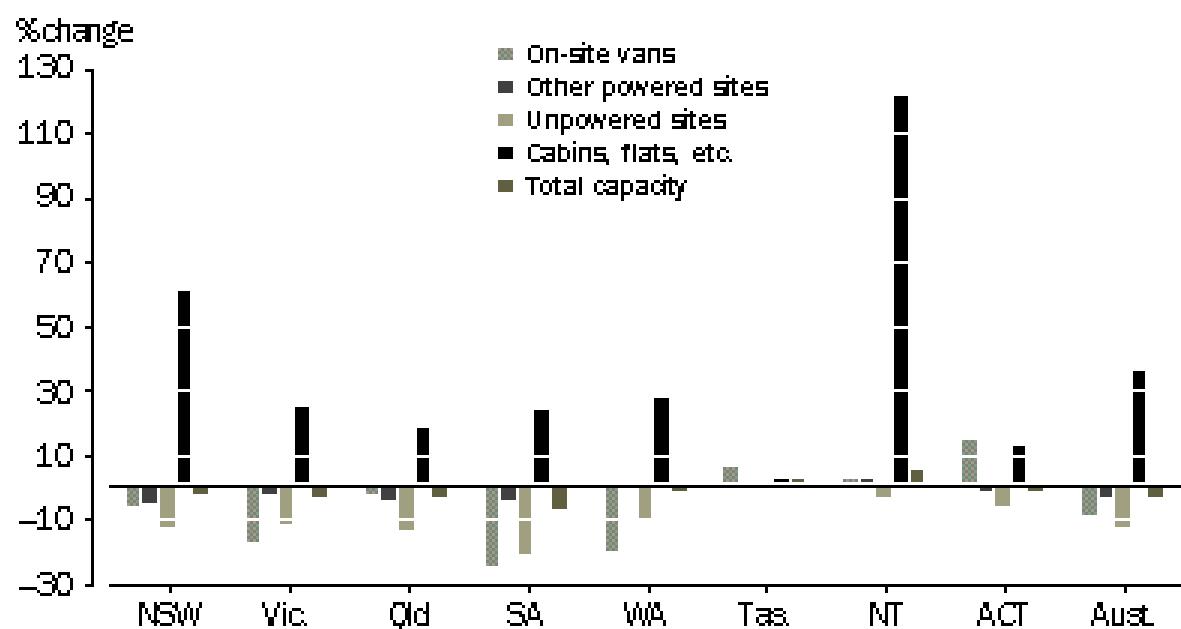


Figure 1.5. The growth in cabin site capacity by Australian State and Territory between December 1997 and December 2001.

(Source: ABS, 2002c)

over 110 per cent from 1997 to 2001 (ABS, 2002b). The decrease in the number of caravan park sites suitable for grey nomads will make obtaining a site difficult if cabin numbers continue to increase and grey nomad numbers increase. Furthermore, Reed and Greenhaigh (2004) have observed that the rising property market is influencing the availability of caravan parks and sites in caravan parks. They highlighted that increasing property values and the seasonality of many tourist parks are contributing factors influencing the closures of some caravan parks, especially in coastal areas. ABS (2002d; 2005c) identified that almost 200 caravan parks across Australia have closed between 2001 and 2004. How many of these caravan parks are located in tourist areas is unknown.

The loss of sites within caravan parks where grey nomads can reside may be small. However, the problem of securing a powered tourist site at popular destinations is amplified by the increase in caravan sales. Hence, as more grey nomads hit the road there appears to be a trend towards fewer powered and non-powered sites being available within caravan parks to cater for this increase. The impact of increasing grey nomad numbers is being felt during the peak season and at popular destinations like Cairns, Bowen, Broome and Darwin. Furthermore, over demand on sites may restrict the freedom of grey nomads to travel with no set itinerary. This freedom is something many grey nomads cherish (Oryx and Leonard, 2005). Forcing grey nomads to book weeks or months in advance to ensure that they can secure a site will impact on some grey nomads' desire to travel and may be a catalyst for changes in mobility patterns or a decline in the number of grey nomads visiting a particular destination. If grey nomad numbers decline, this may have a detrimental effect on regional economies. Grey nomads purchase groceries, fuel, accommodation, sightseeing tours, as well as caravan and vehicle accessories and spare parts during their journey, injecting money into numerous regional economies. Any changes in mobility or expenditure patterns may inhibit the economic growth of the caravan, tourism and related service industries across the country, with the impact being felt primarily in regional centres, and locations en route (e.g. Mitchell, Barcaldine).

Destinations that do not address the above issues may in the future cease to be chosen as a destination by grey nomads. Planners need to identify mobility patterns

and trends in destination choice, so local authorities can update and supply adequate services to the correct locations during peak visitation periods. By recognising movement patterns and how mobility and choices of destination changes with age or past visitation, planners can determine what type of grey nomad will be visiting a destination and which destinations attract long or short-term winter populations of grey nomads. Caravan parks at destinations that attract long-term visitation (i.e. multi-month stays) may need to provide different services and facilities than short-stay destinations. Facilities in long-stay caravan parks may need to be upgraded to include larger sites or storage areas for boats, whereas short-stay destinations may require more drive through sites (i.e. sites where grey nomads can pull into and stay the night and keep their vehicle hitched to their caravan).

### **1:3. Aims**

This project will examine the internal temporary mobility patterns of retired seasonal movers to Northern Australia during the winter months. Temporary mobility or circulation is defined as all non-permanent movement across any spatial unit. Grey nomads visiting or residing at a variety of selected coastal and inland destinations above 23.5°S latitude (i.e. Tropical Australia) were surveyed. The objectives of this study are:

- to examine the various socio-economic (i.e. type of retirement income; employment prior to retirement; type of vehicle) and demographic characteristics (i.e. age; gender; marital status; education level) and mobility patterns (i.e. numbers of kilometres travelled daily en-route and at the final destination; number of repeat visits and activities at a destination) of grey nomads;
- to determine the factors (i.e. fuel costs; direction of journey; retirement income) influencing different mobility patterns amongst grey nomads;
- to identify the different sub-groups or categories within the grey nomad population;
- to explain how various grey nomad population characteristics and their travel experiences (e.g. number of trips since retirement; age), in addition to

other external factors (e.g. rising fuel cost, caravan park closures) influence current and possible future grey nomad mobility patterns and;

- to suggest the planning implications for the presence of current and possible increased grey nomad visitation to regional Australia.

#### **1:4. Chapter Outline**

This thesis will be presented in ten chapters, including this introductory chapter. Chapter Two provides a review of the literature relating to human mobility. The discussion will commence with an examination of the differences between migration and circular/temporary movement and theories and typologies relating to mobility. Details will then be provided about mobility patterns and movement flows, primarily in Australia, since the Second World War. In addition, this chapter will highlight the recent trend of seasonal movement amongst the elderly population in developed countries, and provide a summary of previous studies on grey nomads, highlighting areas where our knowledge is incomplete and how this project can fill these gaps.

Chapter Three provides a brief overview of the study area, including maps of the destinations surveyed. Information presented in this chapter will highlight the recent economic and demographic growth of Northern Australia. This chapter will also outline the diverse climatic conditions of northern Australia which attract grey nomads in large numbers. In addition, a short discussion will be provided on the development of major highway/road networks linking northern Australia with southern Australia.

The methodologies used in this project are outlined in the fourth chapter. Definitions used to identify grey nomads will be discussed. This chapter highlights the methods used for the selection of and interviewing of grey nomads and the methodology for selecting caravan parks and camping areas. The methods used in the analysis, and the constraints and biases of this project will be presented in the final sub-section in this chapter.

Chapter Five will present the results from field surveys on the demographic characteristics of surveyed grey nomads (i.e. addressing the first project aim). These include the following characteristics: age; time since retirement; occupation prior to retirement; level of education and the place of summer residence. In Australia, previous studies have identified the demography of grey nomads, and this study will confirm or refute the findings of these past studies and identify if grey nomads are a homogenous population. In addition, differences between grey nomads residing in caravan parks and at free/low cost camping areas at the time of the survey will be highlighted.

The sixth chapter provides a brief discussion of the results obtained primarily from field interviews and supported by quantitative data regarding the level of planning and motivation grey nomads have in relation to their travel (i.e. addressing the second project aim). Apart from research undertaken by Onyx and Leonard (2005; 2007) and Onyx *et. al.* (2007), very little information exists on the reasons why grey nomads undertake such extended winter journeys. Results in this chapter will provide additional insights into the grey nomad phenomena, either supporting Onyx's and Leonard's findings, or rejecting their results.

Chapter Seven will discuss grey nomad mobility. Details will be presented on the length of a grey nomad's trip, their length of stay at particular destinations and the distances a grey nomad will travel either en route to a destination or once at their final chosen destination. Furthermore, this chapter will provide detailed route maps, identifying which highways and road networks grey nomads used throughout their journey to northern Australia and return to their place of residence. Results from this chapter will address the fourth aim of this study.

The factors influencing the variation in grey nomad mobility will be considered in Chapter Eight. Numerous factors can alter the rate and type of movement amongst grey nomads, including the type of destinations grey nomads visit, the age of grey nomads', the number of past trips, length of stay at a destination, length of their trip, the type of activities a grey nomads undertake at a destination and their type of vehicle. The analysis in this chapter will highlight how these factors

combine to alter grey nomad movement patterns. Findings in this chapter will address aims one and two.

Chapter Nine of this thesis provides a discussion on how variations within the grey nomad population influence mobility and their social interaction. Furthermore, this chapter will highlight the thoughts and concerns many grey nomads have towards future travel. In this chapter, grey nomads were classified into sub-populations. The separate classification of the different grey nomad sub-populations were developed after analysing the responses within the questionnaires, field interviews and field observations. In addition, this chapter will provide insights into grey nomad movement and how and why some grey nomads alter their movement pattern with age and/or increase visitation to destinations across northern Australia. This chapter will also discuss the possible implications for certain regional destinations across northern Australia if current trends in mobility alter due to changing circumstances such as rising travel costs and caravan park closures. Aims three, four and five will be considered in this chapter.

The final chapter will contain a summary of the results and a discussion about this project. In addition, Chapter Ten will highlight how this project has furthered scholarly knowledge on the movement patterns of seasonal aged travellers in Australia. Lastly, Chapter Ten will identify some areas where additional studies regarding seasonal movement of seniors are required.

## **Chapter Two**

## **Literature Review**

### **2:1. Introduction**

A characteristic of a post-industrial society is the increase in the type and rate of circular/temporary movement and leisure time (Zelinsky, 1971). This type of mobility involves people moving from one spatial unit to another, with no intent of permanently residing away from their place of original departure. All age groups within a post-industrial society participate in various type of circular movement; the elderly are no exception (Plane, 1992; McHugh *et. al.*, 1995; Collins and Tisdell, 2002). The days have long since gone when the elderly, upon retirement, would withdraw from society and live the remainder of their life in one fixed location. Today's elderly are "healthier, wealthier and wiser" than past aged generations and many are eager for adventure at destinations once deemed exotic (Blazey, 1992; Horneman, *et al.*, 2002).

Each year during the winter months, thousands of elderly from the higher latitudes of Australia make the annual pilgrimage north to escape the southern winter, only returning once the climate in the south becomes desirable. Steve Westh (2001) referred to these retirees as grey nomads. One of the more favoured modes of grey nomad movement involves caravanning (this includes mobile homes and campers). Grey nomads, however, do not travel as one distinct unit. Their movement patterns, choice of destinations and length of stay will vary between individuals (Mings, 1997; Cridland, 2003). Planners need to acquire a full understanding of the "who, when and where" of temporary movers, to ensure adequate services and sufficient infrastructure can be provided in areas of high visitation. Understanding the mobility level of present day grey nomads could provide valuable insight into future trends, thus aiding in the provision of services in highly visited localities. The need for sufficient services and infrastructure at highly visited destinations will gain greater importance, especially as older 'baby boomers' (those born between 1946-1964) start to enter into retirement, causing the numbers of grey nomads to increase over the next decade (Cleaver and Muller, 2002).

This chapter will examine the literature on seasonal elderly movers, highlighting the lack of knowledge on the spatial and temporal movements of grey nomads to northern Australia. As many characteristics of grey nomad mobility are similar, such as motivation to move and type of destination they choose, literature on permanent retirement migration, as well as seasonal movements of retirees from North America and Europe will be utilised to explore the many varying facets of human mobility. This chapter will begin by defining mobility and present some of the major typologies on temporary movement. The examination of the movement patterns of humans in the post World War Two era and the driving processes of temporary mobility, including characteristics of seasonal elderly movement in Australia, will be discussed. In addition, a brief discussion is provided on the variations in the geographical landscape produced by retired seasonal movers in Europe and North America. The problems in defining a grey nomad, the lack of sizeable data sets and the economic implications of large numbers of grey nomads for regional Australia are examined. The final sections of this chapter will highlight the gaps in the literature on grey nomads and how this project endeavours to fill some of these gaps, furthering the knowledge of grey nomad movements and possibly retirement mobility across Australia.

## **2:2. General Definitions of Mobility and Migration**

Zelinsky (1971) defined mobility as involving all types of human movement from one spatial unit to another, irrespective of distance travelled or length of occupation at a location. However, a further definition of mobility is problematic due to its division into two different sub-groups: migration and circulation (see Figure 2.1). These two different sub-groups hinder the establishment of a universal definition (Young, 1999:81). Fellmann *et. al.* (1999:82) defined migration as a “permanent relocation of residential place and activity space” and stated that circular/temporary and short-term moves are “imprecisely considered migration”. Lee (1966:49) described migration as “a permanent or semi-permanent change in residence”, whereas Petersen and Petersen (1986:179) referred to it as “relatively permanent movement over a significant distance”. Any movement across either a

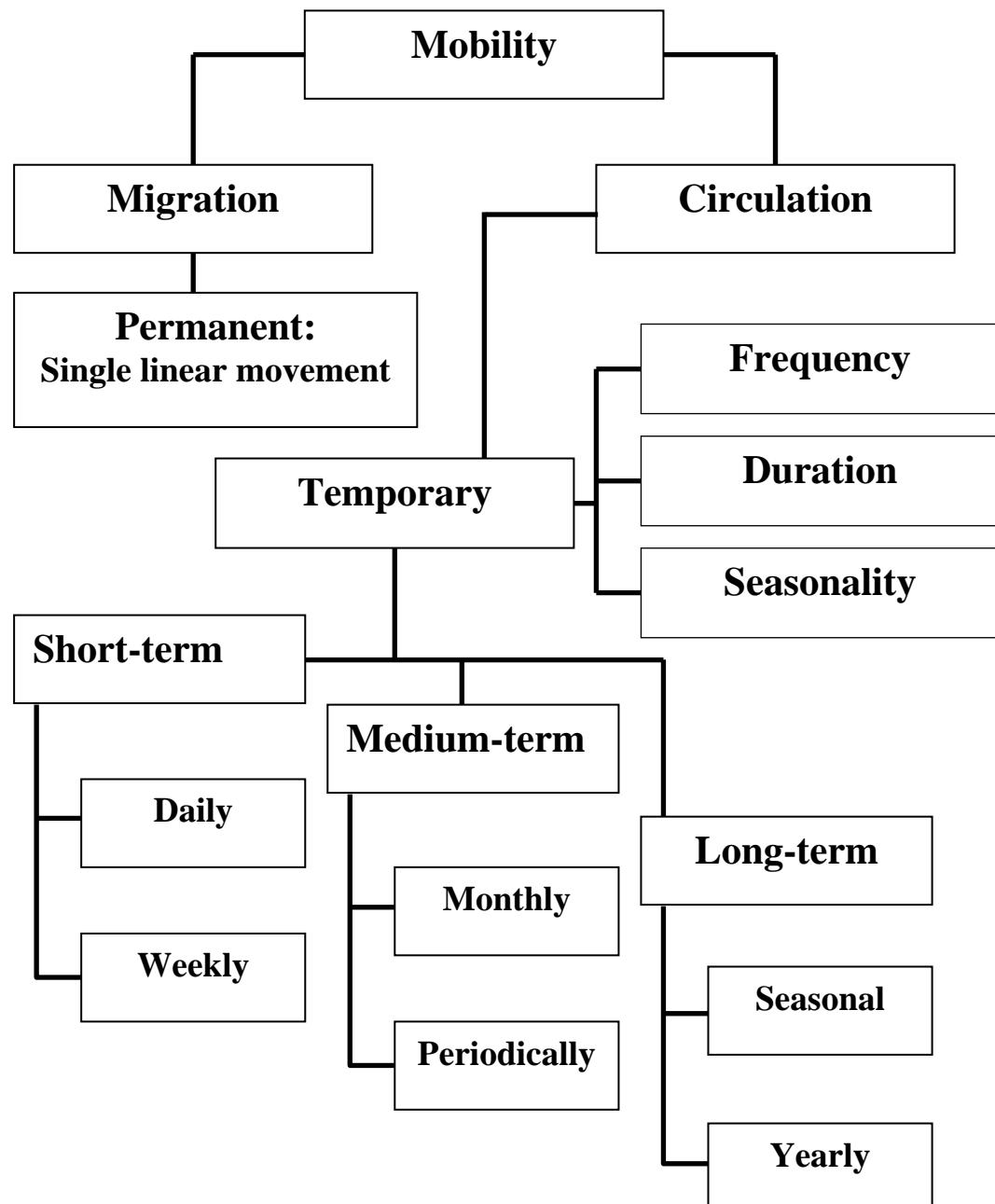


Figure 2.1. The typology of mobility  
(Adapted from Roseman, 1971)

statistical or political boundary is considered to be a significant distance (Gober, 1993). However, defining how permanent is a semi-relatively permanent move and whether semi-relatively permanency implies a short-term move becomes perplexing. The use of both terms conflicts with the Fellmann *et. al's.* (1999:82) definition of migration. To further confuse the matter, Behr and Gober (1982) asked, what is meant by residence? Does a residence need to be fixed in a particular location? A person may reside in a number of places or have no fixed residence. Nomadic people may travel with their home in tow or may construct a temporary dwelling upon arrival at a destination. Other nomadic Indigenous groups may move over vast areas and not cross any type of geo-political boundaries. Furthermore, many geographers use the term non-permanent migration or seasonal migration when talking about some forms of circulation (Krout, 1983; Hogan and Steinnes, 1994; Gustafson, 2002).

To help define migration, the United Nations has divided migration into two categories: short-term or people intending to stay at a new location for a period less than 12 months; and long-term occupancy or stays greater than 12 months (Young, 1999). However, not all countries fully utilise this definition. The Australian Government defines a short term mover as any person who lives or intends to live at a given location for a period less than six months. Long term movers are those people who intend to reside at a location for more than six months ABS (1996). The ABS (1996) classed the latter as permanent movers. By either of these definitions, any movement, albeit over a short or long distance, is effectively classified as migration. However, as Bell (1996:3) stated, setting an arbitrary time frame on some forms of temporary mobility may under-represent the volume of people participating in many types of temporary moves (e.g. holidays, business trips, seasonal working).

For the purpose of this study, the permanent/semi-permanent change of residence proposed by Lee (1966) will be used, as no temporal or spatial constraint exists. This definition allows for short and long-term movements over any given distance. However, Lee (1966) did not include temporary movers like nomads, migrant workers and seasonal movers within his definition, although, this definition can accommodate all forms of circular mobility.

### 2:2:1. Theories and the Typologies of Mobility

Unlike physical laws (e.g. Einstein's Laws regarding gravity), laws governing mobility cannot be 'set in stone' (Lee, 1966), as the reasons to move location can vary between individuals and groups (Plane, 1992; McHugh and Mings, 1996; Pandit, 2000). The mechanisms which drive mobility, like motive and ability to move, are constantly changing throughout time and can vary between societies and regions (Zelinsky, 1971). Thus, establishing strict scientific laws about mobility is difficult. Laws governing the movement of people need to be elastic, so as to accommodate these changing characteristics. However, some basic laws have been proposed, setting the foundations for understanding migratory processes.

E. G. Ravenstein (1834-1913) in 1885 and 1889 suggested a number of basic laws governing mobility (cited in Lee, 1966). Table 2:1 highlights eleven of Ravenstein's major laws of migration. Ravenstein based these laws on observations made in the United Kingdom during the period of rapid industrialisation and urban growth between 1871 and 1881; these were later supplemented with data from North America. Ravenstein's laws set the foundation for migratory studies and inadvertently made him the founder of the "push-pull model". The push-pull model addresses the idea that there are push factors (i.e. dissatisfaction with one's present location), which help to drive an individual from that location, while the pull factors are attributes that appeal to the mover at a distant location (Dorigo and Tobler, 1983). The nature and strengths of these characteristics at each location (push or pull factors) will govern the reasons why a person will move and to where. In addition, the strength of the factors that are influencing an individual will also determine the type of movement which is undertaken. In the case of temporary movement for example, the positive factors at the desired destination are strong enough to promote a temporary move (i.e. visitation) but not strong enough to warrant a permanent relocation (Behr and Gober, 1982).

Ravenstein argued that the majority of movements occurred from the rural sector towards the industrialising urban centres in a step-by-step motion, as opposed to a direct movement (see Law Four in Table 2.1). Therefore, people mainly migrated for economic purposes or to improve their socio-economic status, with males

*Table 2.1. Eleven of Ravenstein's Laws of Migration*

<b>Number</b>	<b>The Laws</b>
1	Migration and Distance: Most migration occurs over a short distance.
2	The majority of long distance travel favour locations, which are centres of commerce and industry.
3	Most migration is in a rural to urban direction.
4	Most migration proceeds in a step-by-step process (As migrants leave rural areas for big cities, migrants from more remote areas take their place, until the pull of the big city forces another move).
5	Each migratory flow produces a counter flow.
6	The natives in towns are less migratory than their counterparts in rural areas.
7	Female migrants favour journeys of short distance, whereas long distance travel favours males.
8	Counties having an extended boundary in proportion to their area, naturally offer greater facilities for an inflow ... than others with a restricted boundary.
9	Migration streams sweep along with them many of the natives of the counties through which they pass and deposit, in their progress, many of the migrants, which have joined them at their origin.
10	Migratory currents flow along certain well defined geographical channels.
11	Large centres tend to grow by immigration rather than natural increase.

(Source: Ravenstein, 1885; 1889 cited in Lee, 1966; Tobler, 1995; Young, 1999)

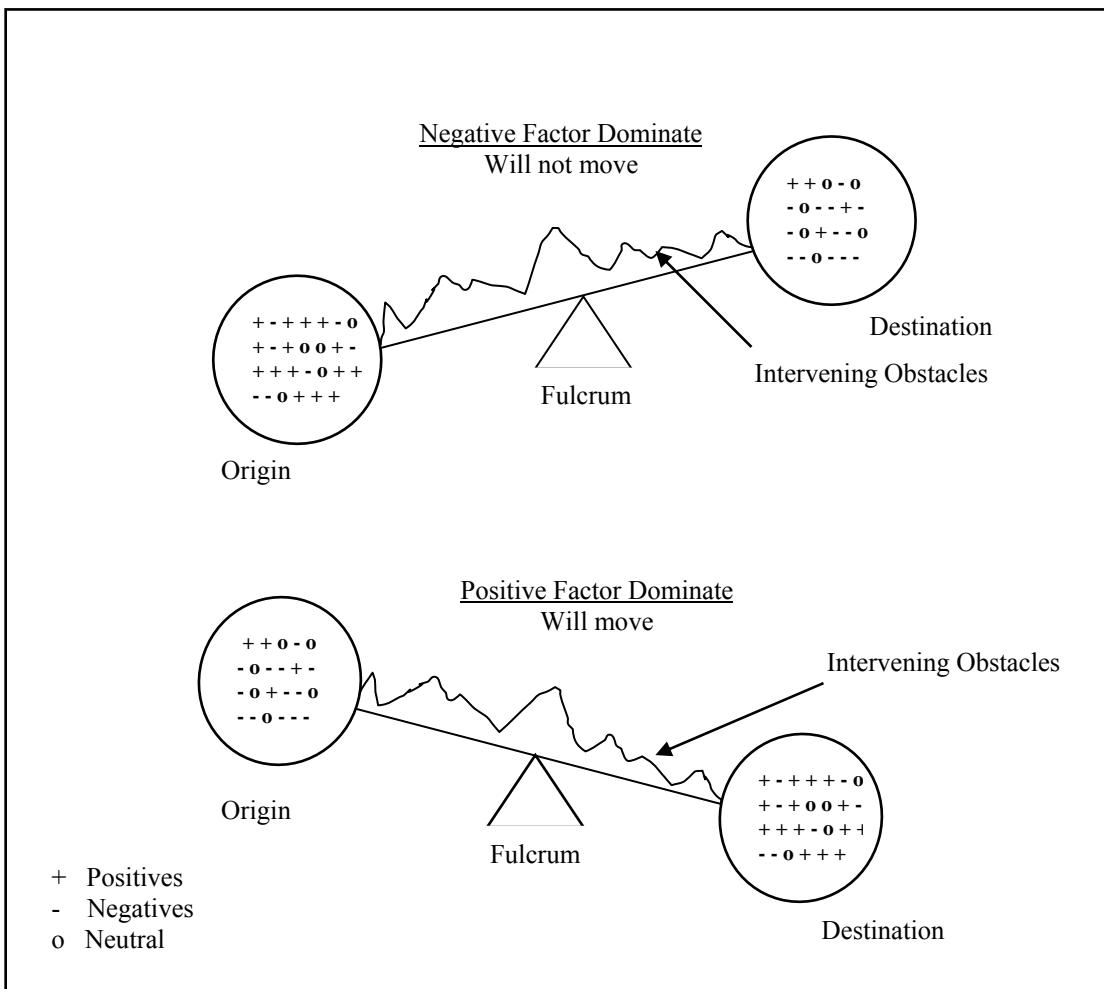
being more mobile over longer distances and females over short distances. Some exponents of migratory studies in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century like Humphreys and Bourne (1889 cited in Lee, 1966) openly criticised Ravenstein's laws as being too simplistic. In addition, others considered Ravenstein's laws to be "essentially individualistic" and "historical" and that government restrictions on movement were ignored (Castle and Muller, 1993:19). Tobler (1995:330) refuted these criticisms as being "superficial readings of.....[his] work". Nevertheless, many recent exponents of migratory research have examined and expanded upon a number of Ravenstein's assumptions, making his laws relevant in today's mobile world. Ravenstein didn't present his laws with circular types of mobility in mind, although some of his laws do have relevance to temporary movement.

Petersen (1958) developed a migration typology where movement was divided into five broad classes of migration: primitive, forced, impelled, free, and mass. Primitive movement he defined was the result of ecological factors and when individuals moved due to the availability of food (e.g. hunter/gatherers or nomadic pastoralists). Forced and impelled movement was mobility that is imposed on a population or individual by the state or "some functionally equivalent social situation" (Petersen, 1958: 261). The differences between forced and impelled were that individuals who are forced to move (e.g. slave movement) have no choice in their destination, whereas those impelled to move have some level of choice. Free movement enabled the individual to make an open psychological choice of movement. Petersen referred to these individuals as pioneer movers. Their motivation to move is driven by a strong desire to explore or find a better life. Mass movement is a collective social behaviour where the act of movement is undertaken by a large numbers of individuals driven by a psychological belief of a better lifestyle. Once the numbers become large enough the growth in the movement becomes as Petersen (1958: 264) "semi-automatic", growing with little need of promotion, as if movement becomes almost a cultural norm. Petersen (1958) used the mass emigration of Swedish nationals to the United States of American (USA) between 1861 and 1870, where an average of 9 300 Swedes migrated as a prime example. After the first group of Swedish emigrates arrived in the USA and word of the benefits available in the USA filtered back to Sweden more Swedish emigrates began to arrive. One of the driving factors that Petersen highlighted for this movement was

the improvement in transportation systems, allowing for greater ease in movement. The grey nomad phenomenon can be aligned with Petersen's free and mass movement characteristics.

Stouffer (1940) theorised that socio-economic factors as well as distance, contributed to destination choice. He explored the concept of "intervening opportunities", which states that the number of people moving to a given destination is in proportion to the increase in opportunities, which can be found at that distance. Put simply, for an individual to travel a long distance, the opportunities present at a distant location must be sufficiently greater than the opportunities present at shorter distances for long distance movement to occur. However, with the advance of faster and affordable transport systems (e.g. flight, fast rail system, motorways,) the influence of distance has lessened. Settlement patterns are no longer measured in distance from point A to point B, but in the time taken to travel between these locations (i.e. people living in the outer suburbs of a city may consider the time it takes commuting to work rather than the actual distance). Demographers and geographers may need to refer more to temporal processes in understanding future settlement patterns. Stouffer's (1940) model helped strengthen the push-pull theory, although he failed to discuss how barriers or obstacles relating to the act of moving can influence the motivation to move.

Building on Stouffer's (1940) theory of intervening opportunities, Lee (1966) proposed that there are "positive", "neutral" and "negative" aspects, as well as "intervening obstacles" (e.g. cost of travel, dangers) placed upon movement. This inferred that movement would only occur if the positives at the prospective destination outweighed the negatives at the place of departure and that the numbers of intervening obstacles in the act of moving are low enough not to impede overly on the desire to undertake movement (see Figure 2.2). This theory is applicable to the increase in mobility amongst today's elderly. In the past, poor health, lack of financial security, inadequate road and communication networks such as phone coverage, all acted as intervening obstacles inhibiting elderly mobility. Since the Second World War, these obstacles impeding movement have been decreasing, allowing many elderly in developed countries to move freely over greater distances. In addition, the warm weather during winter in tropical areas acts as a positive (pull) factor and the



*Figure 2.2. Push – Pull theory incorporating Lee's 'intervening obstacles': when the positives outweigh the negatives and the obstacles are not considered too high, migration will occur.*

(Adapted from Stouffer, 1940; Lee, 1966)

colder climate as a negative (push) in temperate locations, promoting the desire to move.

In 1971, Wilbur Zelinsky published his paper “The Hypothesis of the Mobility Transition” incorporating demographic and socio-economic factors into our understanding of the processes that drive mobility. Zelinsky concluded that as a society progresses through five stages of the demographic transition (i.e. high fertility/high mortality [primitive] towards low fertility/low mortality [super advanced]) a change occurs in the type and volume of humans moving (see Table 2.2). For each demographic transition, Zelinsky suggested a corresponding mobility transition, all driven by the growing needs a society would impose upon itself, in the desire to modernise or maintain its standard of living. Even though there are few societies presently in Zelinsky’s “pre-modern traditional” (Phase A/1) and “super advanced” phases (Phase E/5), Zelinsky’s broadly stated assumptions for mobility transition amongst his three remaining phases (i.e. early and late transitional societies; and the advanced society) do correlate with their corresponding demographic transition. In addition, Zelinsky stated that some forms of circular movements in his super advanced society would begin to decline, especially inter-urban and intra-urban movements as more people chose to work from home due to improved communication links. Zelinsky (1993) later critiques his typology and accepted some of Cadwallader (1993) criticisms that many of his concepts were Eurocentric and timebound. However, other forms of mobility like leisure-related moves might indeed increase as people have more time for recreational pursuits.

Zipf (1946) theorised that there is an inverse relationship between distance travelled and the number of people who participate in a move. He concluded that most movements were towards big cities and from this pattern he formulated the gravity model. Similarly, Pryor (1975) theorised that the movement of population was inverse to the directional flow of modernisation. He concluded that modernisation occurred firstly at a central point, “a core” (usually a town or a large city), and gradually moved out towards more remote/frontier regions. An inverse movement then occurred with the population moving towards the area of modernisation (gravitational pull), in the endeavour to establish a better standard of living. Therefore, the movement was from the “traditional” towards the “modern”. Petersen

*Table 2.2. The demographic and mobility transition phases of Zelinsky's transition theory.*

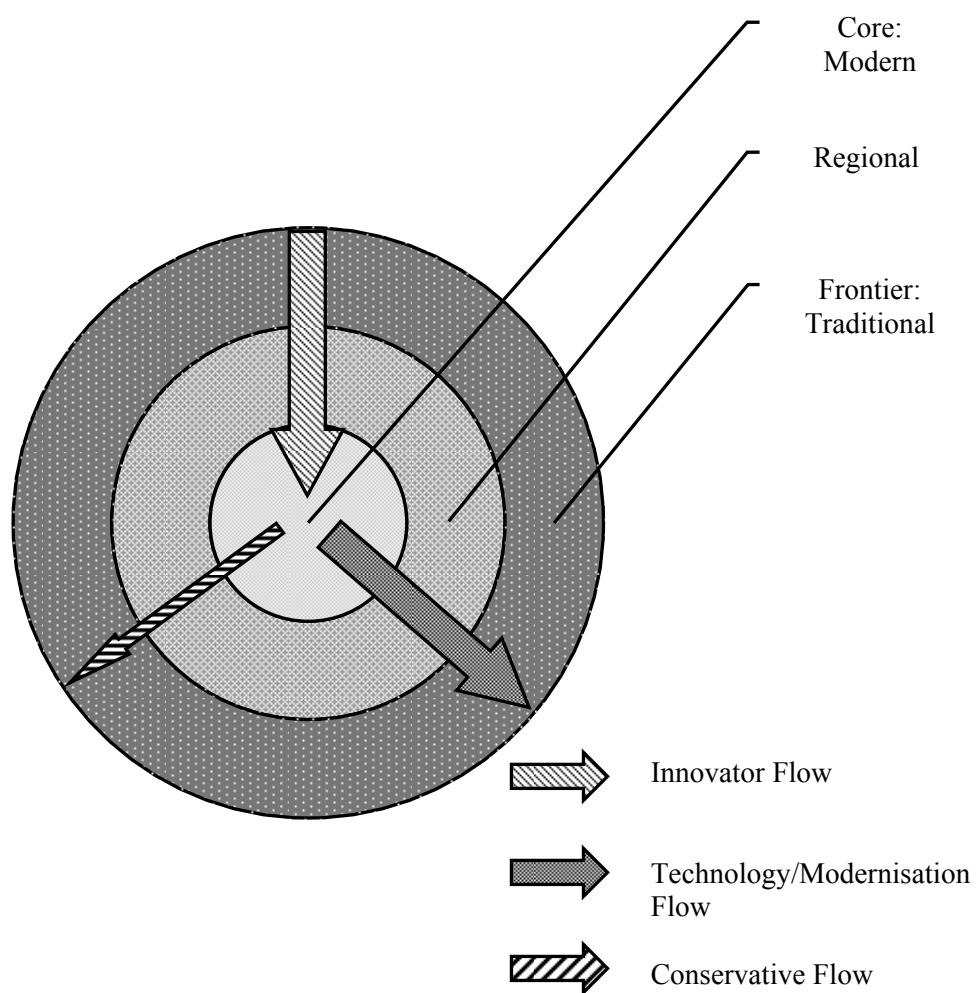
<b>Demographic Transition</b>	<b>Mobility Transition</b>
<u>Phase A: The Pre-modern Traditional Society</u> *Fertility rate fluctuates between moderate to high *Mortality at a similar rate to fertility but with greater fluctuation. *Little to no increase or decline in long-range population growth.	<u>Phase 1: The Pre-modern Traditional Society</u> *Little genuine migration and only such limited circulation as are sanctioned by customary practice in land utilisation, social visits, commerce, warfare, or religious observance.
<u>Phase B: The Early Transition Society</u> *Slightly noticeable rise in fertility, which remains high. *Rapid decline in mortality * Relative rapid natural increase	<u>Phase 2: The Early Transition Society</u> *Massive movement from countryside to cities, old and new. *Significant movement of rural folk to colonisation frontiers, if land unsuitable for pioneering is available within country. *Major outflow of emigrants to available and attractive foreign destinations. *Under certain circumstances, a small but significant, immigration of skilled workers, technicians, and professionals from more advanced parts of the world. *Significant growth in various forms of circulation.
<u>Phase C: The Late Transitional Society</u> *Major decline in fertility; slight and slow at first becoming rapid later, until another slowdown occurs as fertility approaches mortality levels. *A continuing but slowing in the declining mortality rate. *A significant but deceleration in natural increase	<u>Phase 3: The Late Transitional Society</u> *Slackening, but still major, movement from countryside to city. *Lessening flow of migrants to colonise frontiers. *Emigration on the decline or ceased totally. * Further increases in circulation, with growth in structural complexity.
<u>Phase D: The Advanced Society</u> *The decline in fertility has terminated, and a socially controlled fertility oscillates rather unpredictably at low to moderate levels. *Mortality is stable at levels near or slightly below fertility with little year-to-year variation. *There is either a slight to moderate rate of natural increase or none at all.	<u>Phase 4: The Advanced Society</u> *Residential mobility has levelled off and oscillates at a high level. * Movement from country to city continues but further reduced in absolute and relative terms. *Vigorous movement of migrants from city to city and within individual agglomerations. *If settlement frontier has persisted, it is now stagnant or actually retreating. *Significant immigration of unskilled and semi-skilled labour from developing countries. *There may be significant international migration or circulation of skilled and professional personnel, but direction and volume of flow depends on specific conditions. Vigorous accelerating circulation, particularly the economic and pleasure-oriented, but other varieties as well
<i>Phase E over page</i>	<i>Phase 5 over page</i>

<i>Continues</i>	<b>Demographic Transition</b>	<b>Mobility Transition</b>
	<p><u>Phase E: Future Super-advanced Society</u></p> <p>*Not possible to predict future fertility patterns but likely births will be carefully controlled by individuals or perhaps by socio-political means.</p> <p>*A stable mortality pattern slightly below Phase D, unless organic diseases are controlled and lifespan is greatly extended.</p>	<p><u>Phase 5: Future Super-advanced Society</u></p> <p>*Possible decline in residential migration and a de-acceleration in some forms of circulation as better communication and delivery systems are introduced.</p> <p>*Increase in inter-urban and intra-urban migration</p> <p>* Immigration of unskilled labour from developing area continues.</p> <p>*Further acceleration in some current forms of circulation and perhaps the inception of new forms</p> <p>*Strict political control of internal as well as international movements may be imposed.</p>

(Source: Zelinsky: 1971)

(1958) referred to those movers who moved from the traditional to the modern as “innovators” (i.e. people willing to move and embrace a different way of life), compared to the “conservatives” who chose to remain in their traditional way of life. “Conservative” people, as seen in Figure 2:3, also moved in the opposite direction, from the “modern” towards the “traditional”. The reason behind this counter-urban move was related to an increase in dissatisfaction or a result of strangulation within the core region (Jarvie and Bowett, 1980).

Most early studies on mobility primarily focused on the characteristics of permanent migration. However, such movements are not the only form of mobility (see Figure 2.1). Temporary or circular types of mobility are occurring more frequently across the globe, especially in developed countries (Zelinsky, 1971). Since 1976, the volume of Australians enumerating away from their place of usual residence on census night has progressively been increasing, with a 35 per cent increase occurring between 1986 and 1996 (Bell and Ward, 1998b). However, the proportion of people enumerating away from their place of usual residence on census night has slowed slightly between 2001 and 2006 compared to 1986 to 1996. In 2001, 384 042 or 20.7 per cent of Australia’s population had enumerated away from their place of usual residence on census night. In contrast, in 2006, only 206 363 individuals or 10.4 per cent of the population stated that they were enumerated away from their place of usual residence (ABS, 2007a). The reason for this decline may possibly be



*Figure 2.3. Pryor's and Petersen's typologies on mobility: Directional flow of technology produces and an inverse flow in population (innovators) with a small counter-flow of migration (Conservatives).*

(Adapted from Petersen, 1958; Pryor, 1975)

related to the increased cost of travel and higher costs of living. Regardless, the high numbers of people partaking in temporary movement over the last few decades, the importance of understanding the components (i.e. who is moving, where are they going, numbers, seasonality, duration, direction) of this type of mobility can not be understated, as the temporary redistribution of the population can alter the demographic structure of both the departure and host communities. Therefore, knowledge of these components will help lessen any unwarranted implications for destinations and routes.

### **2.2.2. Typologies of Temporary Movers**

Many of the assumptions (e.g. motive; direction) made in permanent migration studies are apparent for temporary mobility, but additional factors need to be analysed, including frequency of movement, duration of stay and seasonality (Bell, 2001). The majority of literature on circular/temporary movement has predominantly focused on temporary mobility in developing countries due to their variation in population pressures and uneven distribution of regional wealth (Chapman and Prothero, 1983; Djamba *et. al.*, 1999; Guest, 1999; Hampshire and Randall, 1999). However, Zelinsky (1971) hypothesised that the majority of temporary moves should occur in industrialised nations. The increased level of circular movement in developed countries is driven by socio-economic pressures to maintain living standards. Furthermore, greater leisure time and the improved transport and communication networks in developed countries have reduced the intervening obstacles on circular movement, making movement easier for the majority of their population.

The lack of any sizable data source (i.e. failure of censuses in identifying individual temporary movers) has limited research into circulation studies in developed countries (Bell and Ward, 1998a; Happel and Hogan, 2002). This lack of research has also limited the number of publications about circular movement in the literature on population geography. However, over the last two to three decades research into the many facets of circular mobility has slowly increased. Thus, our knowledge and understanding regarding circular movement has enabled some scholars to develop circular mobility typologies.

The majority of studies into circular movement have involved small-scale surveys, focusing on particular forms of movement in a given spatial setting. Studies in recent years include the examination of the many facets of the fly-in/fly-out mining workers (Houghton, 1993), people attending conferences (Zelinsky, 1994), seasonal fruit and vegetable pickers (Hanson and Bell, 2003), hospitality workers (Adler and Adler, 1999) and seasonal movement among the elderly (Biggar, 1979; Krout, 1983; Hogan, 1987; Grenier and Perigoe, 1995; Mings and McHugh, 1995; Pollard, 1996; Mings, 1997; Hogan and Happel, 2001; 2002 Rylander, 2001; Happel *et. al.*, 2002). One of the major reasons for this examination into temporary movers on a small-scale is because each type of temporary move has contrasting characteristics and can pose different types of pressure upon services and infrastructure at various locations (i.e. the point of departure, communities en route and the host communities). The extent to which these impacts affect a destination will depend on who is moving, the duration of the move, the movement type (i.e. consumption and production based) and the frequency and time of movement. Thus, developing a holistic examination of temporary movement is complex, but not impossible.

Roseman (1971) compared temporal and spatial processes of mobility including temporary movement. Roseman's (1971) typology broke mobility down into "reciprocal" and "migratory movement". Reciprocal is a movement involving a return to the point of origin and migratory movement involves a permanent move with no return. Gould and Prothero (1975) in their study of mobility patterns in tropical Africa referred to reciprocal movement as "circulation". Roseman (1971) then added a psychological factor, which involved "partial displacement" and that of "total displacement". Partial displacement involved a move which does not break ties with the point of departure (e.g. a young adult moving from his/her parental home), whereas total displacement involved a severing of all ties with the old location and the re-establishment of new ties at the new destination (see Figure 2.4). All temporary moves involve a partial displacement, whereas permanent moves can have either partial and/or total displacement.

Smith (1989) in his study of temporary movers in the United States divided temporary movers into two classes: those who are consumers of goods and services

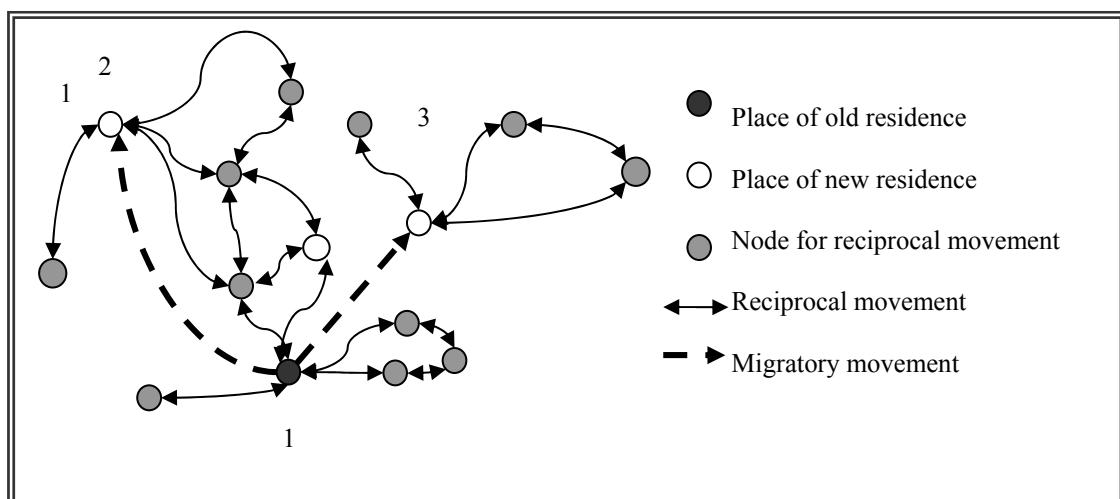


Figure 2.4. Roseman's migratory movements showing connectivity to nodes: Residents 1 (original family home) and 2 (new residence) still have connecting nodes after the move (Partial Displacement), whereas resident 3 has no connection to the old residence (Total displacement). Movement number 3 usually involves migration over a greater distance.

(Adapted from Roseman, 1971)

like leisure orientated movements; and those who produce (e.g. seasonal workers). Bell and Ward (1998a; 2000) and Bell (2001) used Smith's (1989) typology to examine temporary movements in Australia (see Table 2.3). Consumption type moves rely on the provision of services and goods at a destination to attract the mover; therefore, the primary purpose of the travel is not related to any form of production. Production based moves are driven by the desire to create some type of economic activity or contribution at the destination that will produce a service or a consumer good. However, the margin between these two types of movement is ambiguous. Working holidays are a problematic area of classification as the underlying motive to move can be driven by both production and consumption to varying degrees (i.e. backpackers working as fruit pickers or ardent snow skiers working in the snowfields) (William and Hall, 2000). In addition, all production based moves require some level of consumption during the duration of the travel (Bell and Ward, 2000). Traditionally, Australia has had a long history of temporary movers since colonial settlement. The majority of the early movements in Australia were linked to the agricultural sector and were production-related. Examples of these movements included sheep shearers (Markey, 2002), swagmen (Waterhouse, 1999) and sugar cane cutters (Burrow and Morton, 1986:35-41). The lack of substantial transport networks, financial constraints and less leisure time in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw consumption type moves kept to a minimum. However, improvements in transport and communication networks and rising living standards during the mid-to-late twentieth century allowed consumption movements to become more prolific. An analysis by Bell and Ward (2000) concluded that seven out of every ten temporary moves in Australia in the 1990s were consumption based. As living standards continue to improve and individuals begin to have more leisure time the level of consumption type moves may increase in the future.

### **2:2:3. Typologies Involving the Temporal Boundaries to Temporary/Circular Mobility**

Each year during the early 1990s, approximately seventeen per cent of Australians changed their permanent residence (Newton and Bell, 1996), with the average Australian expected to make around thirteen-fourteen moves during their life

*Table 2.3: Bell's consumption and production topology for migration*

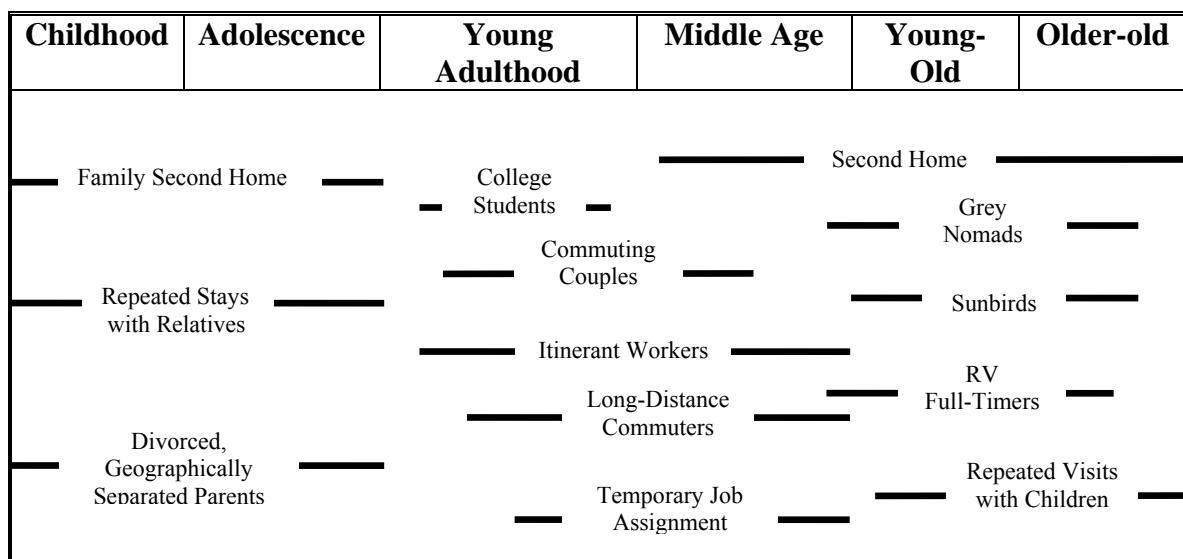
<b>Type of Movement</b>	<b>Reason for Moving</b>	
	<b>Production Related</b>	<b>Consumption Related</b>
Permanent Migration	Labour market	Housing adjustment
		Amenity – led migration
Temporary Migration	Business travel	Family visits
	Long distance commuting	Excursions
	Seasonal work	Seasonal migration
		Extended recreational travel
		Conferences and conventions
		Study and residential courses
		Hospitalization
		Incarceration
Diurnal Moves	Commuting	Shopping
		Recreation

(Source: Bell and Ward, 2000)

(Bell and Hugo, 2000:31). Most permanent moves occur on a long-term basis, compared to temporary movement, which generally involves a shorter length of stay (i.e. less than a year). Two types of typologies have been established on the temporal boundaries involving circular mobility. One typology looks at how temporary movement varies during the life course of an individual (McHugh *et. al.*, 1995), and the other refers to the different types of temporary moves and how they relate to a different temporal time frame over various spatial boundaries (Bell and Ward, 1998a).

A study by McHugh *et. al.* (1995) examined the way in which temporary mobility may change during the life of an individual. From their study they constructed a ‘life course typology’ of temporary movement (see Figure 2.5). Age-related movement can be divided into three age groups: childhood-adolescence; young adulthood-middle age; and young old-older old. Very little overlap occurs between these three groups (i.e. the youth, adult and retiree). Predominately the young adulthood-middle age group correlate with the working years and in the production phase of mobility, compared to the two elderly groups and the childhood-adolescence group who are consumers of services. Presently, the population bulge of the baby boomers (those born 1946 to 1964) in developed countries are still in the production phase of mobility (Plane and Rogerson, 1991). However, the older baby boomers in developed countries are fast approaching retirement age, which will generate an increase in the volume of consumption-based mobility in the future as they retire. This trend could raise questions about how well services and infrastructure in these countries will cope in the future as elderly numbers increases and the ratio between consumers and producers of goods and services widen.

Bell and Ward (1998a) constructed a “space-time matrix” which identified the interaction between the varying types of temporary movement over different temporal and spatial boundaries (see Figure 2.6). Their matrix suggested that the type of temporary movements was related to the boundaries crossed and the time spent away from the point of original departure. Short-term movement occurs only over shorter distances and over localised/statistical boundaries (i.e. shopping = residential mobility across local boundaries), while longer temporal moves happen over longer distances and involve moves over large political units (i.e. seasonal/nomadic = movement over inter-regional/international boundaries). From their matrix, the presence of a



*Figure 2.5. Temporary types of mobility and when they are likely to occur during the 'life course' of an individual.*

(Adapted from McHugh *et. al.*, 1995)

**Spatial Boundaries**

		LGA	Urban	National	World
Years	Residential Mobility	Intra-Urban Rural-Urban Urban-Rural	Inter-Regional Inter-Urban	International	
Months				Nomadic	
Weeks			Seasonal Workers	Vacations	
Days			Business Travel	Excursions	
Hours	Shopping	Visiting	Commuting		
	Local Community	Region	Nation	World	

Time

Space

*Figure 2.6. Bell and Ward's space-time matrix.*  
 (Source: Bell and Ward, 1998a)

rudimentary type of distance decay can be established between distance travelled and the duration of movement.

### **2:3. Recent Patterns of Mobility in More Developed Countries**

Since the end of World War Two, but particularly in the 1970s and the early 1980s, the United States and Australia have seen a rapid redistribution of their populations (Bigger, 1979; Hugo, 1986:119:122; Plane and Rogerson, 1991; Plane, 1992; Gober, 1993; Bell, 1992; 1996). Primarily these moves occurred towards the sunbelt (i.e. United States: Florida, Arizona, California; Australia: Queensland, northern parts of New South Wales and Western Australia) and coastal regions (i.e. sea change) and away from the traditional industrial areas (Jarvie and Browett, 1980; Hugo, 1986:133; Gober, 1993; Hamilton and Cook, 1996; Neyland and Kendig, 1996; Rowland, 1996, Bell and Hugo, 2000). In addition, during this period the exodus from rural communities towards urban centres accelerated (Biggar, 1979; Jarvie and Browett, 1980; Plane, 1992; Bell and Ward, 2000), although a smaller counter-urban move did occur in some locations (Hugo and Smailes, 1985; Hugo, 1989; Drysdale, 1991; Bell, 1996:13). Movements towards sunbelt and coastal regions can be related partially to retirement migration (Graff and Wiseman, 1990; Drysdale, 1991; Neyland and Kendig, 1996; Burley and Murphy, 2004), factors involving economic rationalism (i.e. measures taken to decrease production cost, whilst maintaining production and increasing profits) and changes in government policies, such as lower taxes and levies to move, and a reduction in death duties (Biggar, 1979). This trend meant that some businesses moved from the traditional industrial heartlands (United States - northeast; Australia - southeast) to regional centres where labour and real estate costs were reduced. Improvements in transportation and communication links between these peripheral locations and core areas helped to promote development in these outer regions (Krumm, 1983; Plane, 1992).

The presence of the baby boomer generation, due to their large numbers, was a contributing factor in reshaping the structure of society and impacted on the economies of developed countries. In developed countries like Australia, after the Second World War the industrialisation of sunbelt regions resulted in a substantial

increase in the level of international and internal movement to these regions, as employment and business opportunities developed (Plane and Rogerson, 1991; Plane, 1992; Rogers, Raymer and Newbold, 2003). Prior to the Second World War, the bulk of the population lived in areas surrounding the industrial heartlands. When the first of the baby boomers entered the labour market, job opportunities were plentiful. Housing and manufacturing grew to accommodate the needs of the baby boomers, which helped to expand economies in developed countries (Hugo, 1986:302). However, in the manufacturing sector, production mechanised which resulted in a decline in demand for blue-collar labour and the deindustrialisation of certain manufacturing regions (Biggar, 1979; Plane, 1992; Gober, 1993). Similar trends occurred in the labour intensive rural sector. As more baby boomers entered the labour market, job availability began to decline. Furthermore, as the younger baby boomers entered the workforce, housing production could not keep pace with the demand. This increase in demand for housing saw prices for real estate rise rapidly (Gober, 1993). Gober (1993) recognised this trend as one of the mechanisms that triggered the recession of the 1980s. This phenomenon occurred in many developed countries, including the United States and Australia (Plane, 1992, Gober, 1993).

The impact on labour and housing markets in sunbelt regions was not as intense as in the traditional industrial areas. Due to the improvements in communication and transportation networks, sunbelt regions became more easily accessible. In addition, the availability of cheap real estate, plus tax enticements acted as an incentive (a pull) for manufacturing to relocate towards some of these regions (Gober, 1993). An exodus from the traditional industrial areas of both labour and manufacturing soon occurred. A decline in demand within the rural labour market, plus the lack of services and the effects of rural hardships (i.e. isolation, climate and decline in market prices for agricultural commodities), saw a movement away from rural localities towards urban areas (Bell and Ward, 2000). Consequently, the labour market became highly mobile with many family units becoming fragmented as family members moved to distant regions seeking employment opportunities. In addition, improved transport networks allowed for the expansion in many occupations which relied heavily on high levels of mobility (e.g. fly-in/fly-out miners, sales, business executives and military personal). Sullivan (1985) suggested the fragmentation of the

family unit and the increase in occupations reliant on high mobility (i.e. sales persons) has contributed to the rise in mobility amongst today's elderly. The increase in mobility during their working years had weakened 'the ties that bind' an individual to a particular location or groups of people, allowing for higher movement amongst retirees.

### **2:3:1. Patterns in Temporary Mobility in Australia**

Temporary movement in many ways mimics and in some cases acts inversely to trends in permanent migration (Bell and Ward, 2000). Using Australian census data, Bell and Ward (2000) identified a definite northward movement of Australia's temporary movers (see Figure 2.7), which correlates with a similar northward movement in permanent migration. However, many rural and remote regions (i.e. the northern and western regions of Queensland, the Northern Territory, and the northern half of Western Australia), which have seen a net loss in their permanent population have also observed an increase in the number of temporary visitors. The bulk of these movers consist of tourists (Taplin and Qui, 1997), seasonal workers (Bell and Ward, 1998b; 2000; Hanson and Bell, 2003) or long distance commuters associated with fly in/fly out mining operations (Houghton, 1993).

Bell and Ward (1998a; 1998b) identified four types of destinations attracting high concentrations of temporary movers: central cities; tourist destinations; areas attracting seasonal workers; and stopover locations. The economic nature of each temporary move was used to determine which location attracted a particular temporary mover. Each of the above destinations attracted a different type of traveller and their reasons for travelling along with the activities they undertook varied (see Table 2.4). Using 1991 census data, Bell and Ward (1998a; 1998b) compared the demographics of permanent residents with temporary movers. They concluded that temporary movers were more likely to be either retired (>55 years), young adults (15-35 years), widowed or divorced and less likely to be employed. They noted that if a person was employed their place of work was in the mining and agricultural sector,

management or a professional. Hence, they either earned a very high or very low income.

The rate of temporary and permanent moves across the whole of Australia is shown in Figure 2.7. Utilising 1996 census data, Bell and Ward (1999:57) examined the rate of permanent and temporary movement of individuals to Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Queensland. They concluded that northern and western regions of Queensland had a high portion of temporary movers in comparison to permanent residents (see Figure 2.8). Many LGAs in southeast Queensland (e.g. the inner city of Brisbane, Gold Coast and the Hervey Bay/Noosa areas) do receive a high proportion of temporary movers for different reasons (i.e. inner city - job seekers; Gold Coast, and the Hervey Bay/Noosa - holiday makers, travelling retirees). However, the northern coastal LGAs of Queensland, especially Douglas Shire and the Whitsundays Shire, attracted the greater proportion of temporary movers (Douglas = 56.8 percent; Whitsunday = 36.1 percent) in comparison to the percentage of permanent residents (see Table 2.5). Moreover, fourteen LGAs in Table 2.5 are situated on the eastern seaborne, highlighting the dominance of movement to coastal regions.

### **2:3:2. Typology on Recreational/Vocational Multi-Destination Trips**

Early examination of tourist/recreational mobility models generally focused on the movement patterns of individuals travelling to a single-destination (McAllister and Klett, 1976). However, Hanson (1980) and O'Kelly (1982) estimated that approximately 30 to 50 per cent of recreational trips involved multiple destinations. Leiper (1989) and Lue, Crompton and Fesenmaier (1993) stated that the lack of modelling focusing on recreational travel involving multi-destinations can be attributed to the inability of tourism organisations to collect data on the dynamics of this type of movement. Hwang and Fesenmaier (2003) furthered this point by stating that modelling all tourism movement as a single-destination pattern over-simplified tourist flows and was not a true representation of all movements. They stated that it only described at best half of all of tourist movements. Wall (1978) and Tussyadiah *et. al.* (2006) both stated that single-destination and multi-destination trips were fundamentally two different types of movements and should be examined and

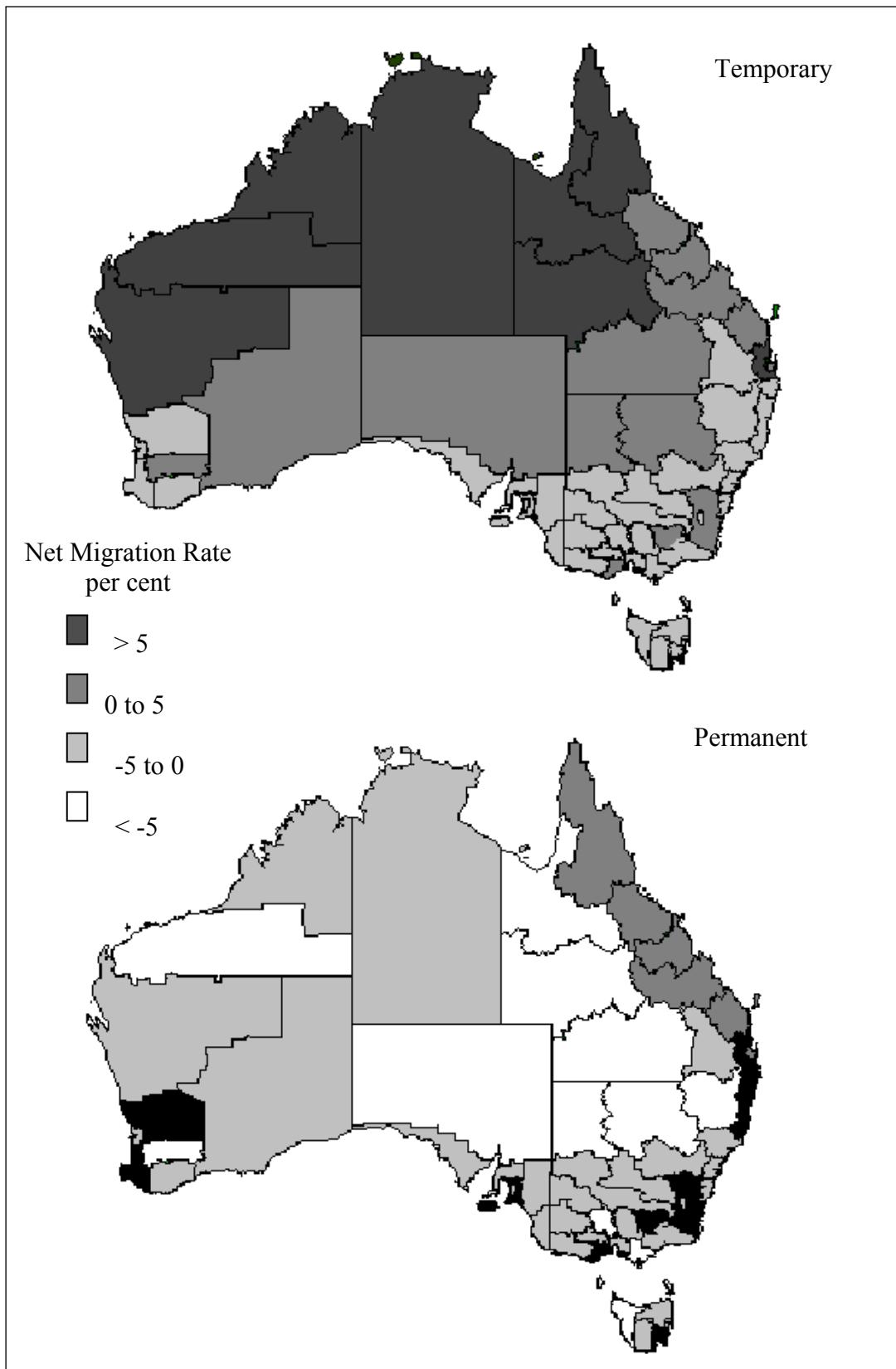


Figure 2.7. The net migration rate of temporary and permanent movers in Australia from the 1996 (temporary movers) and the 1991-1996 (permanent movers) census data. (Source: Bell and Ward, 2000)

*Table 2.4. Bell and Ward's typology highlighting the varying demographic characteristics of temporary movers and the different reasons they visit various destinations.*

Destination Type	Demographic Prone to Temporary Moves	Characteristics or Reason for Move
Central City	Young Adults (15-35 years)	Generally unemployed Low income Recreation Schooling Widowed/divorced
	Retirees (>55 years)	Medical reasons Recreation Widowed/divorced
	Management/Professionals	High income For employment Conferences
Tourist Destination	Young Adults	Recreation Employment Generally low income
	Retirees	Recreation High income
	Management/Professionals	Recreation
Location of Seasonal Work	Young Adults	Employment Mining/Agriculture
	Retirees	Agriculture (i.e. Fruit picking)*
Stopover locations	All Demographic Groups	People in transit Recreational Business

\*Generally semi retirees living a semi nomadic lifestyle  
(Adapted from Bell and Ward, 1998a; 1998b)

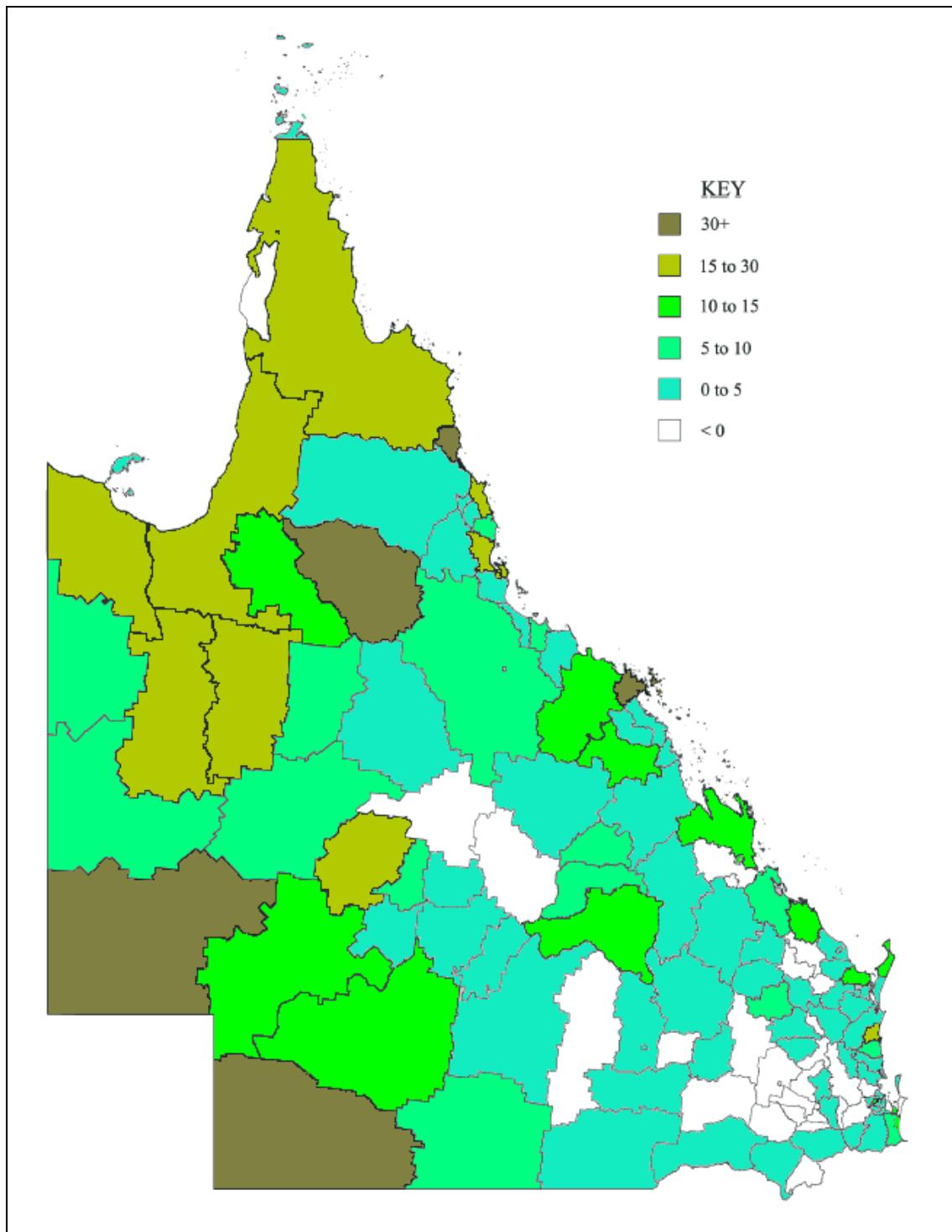


Figure 2.8. Net movement of all temporary movers in Queensland from 1996 census data. Temporary movers are indicated as a percentage compared to usual residents in the local government area. (Source: Bell and Ward, 1999:58)

*Table 2.5. Local government areas with largest net gains of temporary movement, Queensland, 1996.*

Local Government Area	Number	Percent
<b>LGAs with largest absolute net gain</b>		
Gold Coast (C)	33 256	9.7
Cairns (C)	18 934	17.4
Brisbane City Inner	11 160	17.9
Noosa (S)	6 215	17.8
Maroochy (S)	6 067	6.5
Douglas (S)	5 287	56.8
Whitsunday (S)	4 858	36.1
Hervey Bay (C)	4 736	12.6
Townsville (C)	4 642	5.5
Brisbane City Middle	3 332	0.9
Mackay (C)	2 629	3.8
Caloundra (C)	2 590	4.1
Maryborough (C)	2 305	4.0
Livingstone (S)	2 255	10.0

(Source: Bell and Ward, 1999:59)

modelled separately.

In light of this shortcoming in describing multi-destination movement, Lue *et.al.* (1993) produced a multi-destination trip typology, from which they developed a spatial pattern model. In the Lue *et.al.* (1993) typology, they theorised that the purpose and benefits of single destinations is to satisfy the ‘specialisation’ of a particular need or desire. Multi-destination movement, however, provided ‘destination diversification’, as well as ‘benefit diversification’ (experiencing a diverse number of activities) to the traveller. Furthermore, multi-destination movement also required greater planning and ‘mixed strategies’ compared to a single-destination movement.

In Lue *et.al.’s.* (1993) spatial model they developed five patterns of movement: ‘single destination pattern’; ‘en route pattern’; ‘base camp pattern’; ‘regional pattern’; and ‘trip chaining pattern’ (see Figure 2.9). Lue *et. al’s.* (1993) ‘single destination pattern’ involved the direct movement from a place of residence to a single primary destination. This movement involved no stopover when en route. The ‘en route pattern’ is similar to the single destinations, involving a single primary destination, but with the provision of stopover destinations whilst en route. ‘Base camp pattern’ is the direct travel to a single central destination. This destination is then used as a base for short excursions (sometimes involving overnight or multiple night stays) to other locations in the region. ‘Regional tour pattern’, unlike the previous three patterns, does not have a central main destination. The region is the destination. ‘Regional tour pattern’ involves a direct movement to a region (both to and from the region), then an exploration of that region in a circular movement, utilising different destinations as a base. ‘Trip chaining pattern’ is a large circular movement, which does not involve movement on the same network routes at anytime (i.e. no back tracking on the same route). Movement can occur over a large and often multi-regional area. However, Wu and Carson (2007) stated that the spatial distribution of destinations and temporal factors associated with time taken to travel to a destination may influence mobility and destination choice.

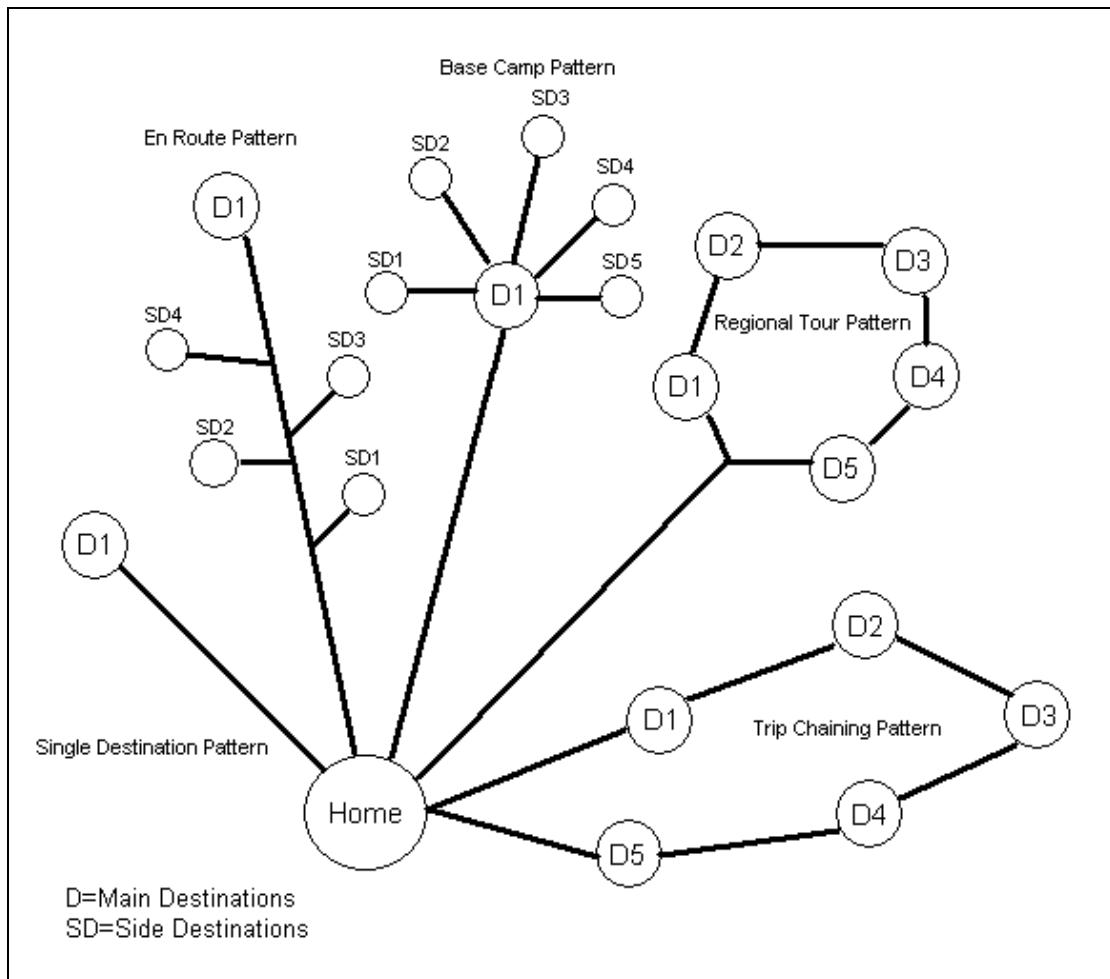


Figure 2.9. Lue et. al's. (1993) Spatial Patterns of Pleasure Vacation Trips typology.

## 2:4. Retirement Mobility

Today's elderly are more financially secure than previous aged generations. Factors that have contributed to their financial security include living in an era of high employment through the economic boom period between 1960 and 1990, establishment of retirement schemes, and the purchase of real estate (i.e. family home) prior to the rise in the real estate market in the 1980s. These factors, coupled with the improvements in health care, life expectancy, increased leisure time, better transport and communication links, removed many of the intervening obstacles imposed on travel for the elderly. These factors have allowed many of them to become highly mobile (Wiseman and Roseman, 1979; Wiseman, 1980; Duncombe, Robbins and Wolf, 2001). The phenomenon of permanent retirement migration has been extensively studied in Europe, the United States and Australia (Murphy and Zehner, 1988; Longino and Crown, 1988; Drysdale, 1991; Hazelrigg and Hardy, 1995; Rowlands, 1996; King *et. al.*, 1998; Williams *et. al.*, 2000; Gustafson, 2002; Conway and Houtenville, 2003). Yet studies on the seasonal movement among the elderly in Australia (i.e. the grey nomads) and Europe are limited, unlike investigations undertaken on 'snowbird' populations in North America (i.e. Canadian and northern United States retirees who undertake seasonal movement).

Many of the driving motives to move (i.e. climatic amenity, closeness to family and friends, improved lifestyle, economic factors) between elderly permanent and temporary movers are quite similar (Wiseman, 1980; Sullivan, 1985; Hogan, 1987; Fournier *et. al.*, 1988; Graff and Wiseman, 1990; Longino and Marshall, 1990; Drysdale, 1991; Longino *et. al.*, 1991; Steinnes and Hogan, 1992; Hogan and Steinnes, 1993; King *et. al.*, 1998). However, the choice of location and the motivation may vary between individuals. Some elderly are 'pushed' out from their old residence by socio-economic factors (i.e. housing costs) as well as factors external from their household (i.e. crime) or biophysical factors such as cold weather (Drysdale, 1991; Steinnes and Hogan, 1992; Hogan and Steinnes 1994). Research by Drysdale (1991) on retirees in Australia concluded that the majority of retirees who permanently migrate generally have a past history (i.e. a tie) with their chosen destination, either through past visitations or through family and friends. Most moves towards

retirement locations on the coast are usually climatic-amenities related (i.e. elderly seeking a more favourable climate to live), and moves to inland retirement centres are driven primarily by the need to be closer to family and friends (Drysdale, 1991).

Government policy can influence a retiree's choice of retirement location. A study by Conway and Houtenville (2003) identified that choice of destination differs between younger elderly (<65 years of age) and older elderly (>75 years of age) in the United States. Younger elderly tend to migrate to destinations with a more favourable climate and/or government policies with low income tax on investments and increased welfare spending (Gustafson, 2001). Conversely, older elderly appear to avoid destinations that have a high cost of living and government policies which tax inheritance, properties and gifts (Conway and Houtenville, 2003). These are the 'pull' factors that help drive the elderly from their old residence to reside in a new location.

Retirement migration is not restricted to intra-national movement. A phenomenon which has increased over the last two decades, especially in Europe, is international retirement migration (IRM). IRM movement has only been examined recently. In Europe, this type of movement generally involves retirees from northern Europe permanently residing in southern Europe, chiefly around the Mediterranean. For example, King *et. al.* (1998) and later Williams *et. al.* (2000) studied retirees from the United Kingdom (UK) living in southern Europe (i.e. the island of Malta; the Tuscany region of Italy; Algarve region of Portugal; and the Costa del Sol in southern Spain). Like Drysdale's (1991) findings, they reported that in almost all cases retirees had some past connection with their choice of retirement locations. The majority of British retirees to Malta have military backgrounds and had been part of the British military presence in Malta during and after World War Two. Amongst these retirees, many are married to members of the local community. A high proportion of retirees to Tuscany had previously worked within Italy prior to retirement. In the case of retirees to Costa del Sol and Algarve, past ties were generally associated with having spent time there during vacations (King *et. al.*, 1998).

Retirement migration has major benefits and implications for both the original community and especially the host community, regardless of whether movement is

intra-national or IRM. Retirement migration sees a transfer of wealth from the point of origin to the host community. The 1991 Spanish census showed that over forty-four thousand retirees from northern Europe over the age of 55 years lived in Spain (Rodriguez *et al.*, 1998). The majority of these retirees had transferred their investments and their entire consumer spending from northern Europe to southern Europe. This sizeable transfer of wealth reduced the capital base of their native country, whilst boosting the economies of host countries. Longino and Crown (1990) identified that retirees moving to Florida between 1985 and 1989 had produced a net gain for Florida of US\$6.5 billion. New York for the same period experienced a net loss of \$3.3 billion as a result of retirees leaving the city. Additionally, for every two and half new retirees that moved to Florida, one new job was created (Conway and Houtenville, 2003). This transfer of wealth provided a foundation for capital grants to improve infrastructure (e.g. health services) and increased consumer spending in the host community (Blakemore, 1999). However, as the number of wealthy elderly movers to a location increases, the cost for local housing also rises in the face of increased demand, resulting in many locals on lower incomes being forced out of the housing market. In addition, when there is a concentration of elderly moving to a particular retirement location, it alters the population structure within the host community (King *et. al.*, 1998). An increase of services to cater for an elderly population (e.g. health care) is required to maintain growth and mitigate against return migration.

An important factor that must be analysed is a retiree's level of satisfaction with their choice of retirement destination. If the level of satisfaction is sufficiently low, return migration (i.e. permanent move to the area from which they came) or a move to a different location may occur (Haas and Serow, 1993; Duncombe, Robbins, and Wolf, 2003, Burnley and Murphy, 2004). Murphy and Zehner (1988) researched the level of satisfaction of permanent retired migrants in the sunbelt region of Port Macquarie on the Mid-North Coast of New South Wales. They concluded that retirees were highly satisfied with smaller townships like Lake Cathie, 20-40kms from the centre of Port Macquarie. Lake Cathie is considered to be an easy driving distance, having the same climate and providing the same level of services as Port Macquarie. In addition, many thought that Lake Cathie is quieter and a more pleasant

place for retirement than Port Macquarie. Moreover, tourists who continuously revisit the same destination also display a similar high level of satisfaction with their choice of destination (Gitelson and Crompton, 1984). This result may have significance as elderly seasonal movers may prefer to reside at small town destinations close to larger centres rather than staying in the actual larger centre.

### **2:4:1. Seasonal Movement Among the Elderly**

With the onslaught of winter, tens of thousands of the elderly in Australia and over a million in the United States, Canada and Northern Europe make an annual pilgrimage towards a warmer/more favourable climate. The nature of their movement differs and can range from flying to a destination and residing in a second home or rental/time-share property, to travelling in mobile home or caravans and staying in caravan parks. Some undertake sailing adventures around tropical waters during the winter months (Macbeth, 2003; Westh, 2000). Gauging the exact number of aged seasonal movers is difficult, as no large data set exists which can differentiate between the elderly seasonal movers from other demographics who partake in temporary movement (Gustafson, 2002). Data from the Australian census can identify those people who reside in caravan parks on the night of the census. The United States census does not have this provision. In Australia the census is just a snap shot of what is occurring on one night once every five years, while in the United States the census is held only once every ten years. The census, therefore, does not represent the bigger picture, as some seasonal moves may occur prior to or after the census date. Bell (2001), however, acknowledged that the Australian census can provide an insight into the reasons behind temporary moves by comparing the demographics of the people away from their usual place of residence with the place they were enumerated at on the census night. Identifying separate sub-groups with similar demographics like grey nomads and elderly seasonal workers or holiday makers, however, may be difficult.

Many motives can contribute to a retiree's decision to undertake seasonal movement. A move to a favourable climatic environment is the main reason given by

retirees who seasonally move, especially amongst those with health problems like rheumatism (Hogan, 1987; Longino and Marshall, 1990; Mings, 1997; Gustafson, 2001; 2002; Cridland, 2003). Many retirees state that seasonal movement breaks up the monotony of every day life by allowing them greater social interaction with other fellow travellers and members of their host communities. This activity promoted a feeling of ‘well being’ (Gustafson, 2002), in addition to providing them new experiences not available at their usual summer residence (Gustafson, 2001). Therefore, many seasonal movers live a dual life: a winter lifestyle embracing new experiences and creating new social bonds, and a summer revolving around family, old friends and traditional surroundings. However, for many elderly seasonal movers, everyday chores like cooking and cleaning remain the same at both locations. Other factors that can strongly underpin the craving to undertake seasonal movement include the desire to travel whilst their health permits (Cridland, 2003), and to take advantage of localities with a low cost of living such as Spain (King *et. al.*, 1998; Gustafson, 2001).

Demographers and geographers have debated whether seasonal movement acts as a precursor to a permanent retirement move to a winter destination. In the United States, Gober and Mings (1984) and Sullivan (1985) concluded that between one third to a quarter of current and ex-snowbirds have considered a permanent move to a winter destination. Unlike permanent movers, aged seasonal travellers can be tied to a number of destinations, including place of usual residence and their winter destination (Sullivan and Stevens, 1982; Sullivan, 1985). Once an individual’s or a couple’s circumstances change (i.e. death of a spouse, ill health or financial situation), it may facilitate a decision on whether or not to continue partaking in seasonal movement, to relocate permanently or to stay at their present location. The decision will depend on the strength of the ties at either the summer and winter destinations or the desire to continue in seasonal movement (Sullivan, 1985; Dixon and Durrheim, 2000). In Europe, the stronger tie appears to be almost exclusively with the country of origin, where friends, family and familiar surrounds are located (Gustafson, 2001). However, if seasonal movement is to remain, the level of intervening obstacles (i.e. financial or difficulty in movement) will need to be considered sufficiently low enough not to inhibit the desire or act of moving.

### 2:4:2. European Seasonal Movers

The literature on European intra-national seasonal movement amongst the elderly is limited and mostly focuses on the short term holiday market. The majority of the literature involving seasonal movement amongst European elderly is embodied in IRM studies as the locations of stay and the motive for movement are similar. This makes defining the differences between permanent and temporary movers difficult if not impossible. Therefore, the author has used information published within the IRM literature to discuss elderly seasonal movers in Europe.

The favoured mode of movement for aged European seasonal movers involves flying to a destination and utilising rental/time-share properties or a second home (Williams *et. al.*, 1997; King *et. al.*, 1998; Warnes *et al.*, 1999; Williams *et. al.*, 2000; Gustafson, 2002). Caravanning amongst the elderly in Europe is not as dominant as in North America and Australia and literature on this topic is scarce. The segregation of Eastern and Western Europe during the Cold War hindered movement between countries in the Eastern block and those countries of Western Europe. This problem did not exist in North America and Australia, where freedom of movement on a continental scale had few barriers. While movement from northern to southern Europe through the Iron Curtain countries was problematic for NATO aligned countries, movement across borders of Western European countries occurred freely. This contributed to the beginnings of recreational caravanning in Europe. Currently, caravanning in the United Kingdom has a strong following. An estimated sixty million holiday nights are spent annually by caravanners in caravans across the UK (Southerton *et. al.*, 1998). However, the end of the Cold War, the expansion of the European Union (EU) to include several former eastern block countries and the creation of the ‘Euro’ is currently aiding the expansion of caravanning in Europe. Caravan sales across Europe are increasing, showing a growth of approximately four per cent annually with almost sixty-five thousand new caravans being sold across Europe in 2003 (European Caravan Federation, 2004). The increase in caravan sales is evidence of the strengthening of the caravanning culture within Europe. Further examination regarding aged individual caravanning (i.e. where are they going and for

how long) across Europe is required to help understand differences and similarities in senior self-drive circular movement and fly in/fly out visitors.

Studies into IMR have identified that the majority of retirees migrating permanently and seasonally from northern to southern Europe (predominately to the Mediterranean) are financially secure, married, have obtained a high level of education, and are in good health (King *et. al.*, 1998; Williams *et. al.*, 2000). A multi-nation study of IRM made by King *et. al.* (1998) on UK retirees to the island of Malta, the Tuscany region of Italy, Algarve region of Portugal, and the Costa del Sol in southern Spain identified the socio-economic status of these elderly movers. The majority of these retirees were employed in a management position or were professional, depending on the destination (i.e. ranging from 71 per cent for Algarve to 55 per cent for Malta). Those retirees employed in skilled labouring (i.e. trades people) comprised less than 25 per cent of the population across all destinations. Rodriguez *et. al.* (1998) identified similar characteristics in past employment from their study of retirees from across Europe to Spain. A high proportion owned more than one premise; one each in the host and native country, especially amongst those residing on the Iberian Peninsula. Most of the retirees living in Malta and Tuscany only owned property in their host country and stayed with friends and family when visiting their country of birth. The average age of retirees in the studies by King *et. al.* (1998) and Rodriguez *et. al.* (1998) was just over 66 years.

King *et. al.* (1998) constructed a rudimentary typology on settlement patterns of IRM. They divided IRM settlement patterns into two classifications: either ‘nucleated’ (primarily an urban style living) or ‘spatially diffused’ (predominately rural type dwellings). These classifications included two types of dwellings: existing or newly constructed (see Table 2.6). Moreover, a correlation existed between the type of dwelling and the level of integration within the host community. Settlement patterns in Malta and Tuscany were comprised of primarily farmhouse and/or villas situated on the periphery of urban areas. This type of residence is termed ‘spatially diffused’. Integration is high in both regions, although the levels of fluency in the local languages varied between the two destinations. In Malta, English is widely spoken and the need to converse in Maltese in daily living has little necessity. In

Tuscany, most UK retirees are fluent in Italian due to their pre-retirement working relationship with the Italian lifestyle (i.e. business dealings; working in Italy). Those retirees living in a ‘spatially diffused’ environment have a long working history with the culture of their host community. This feature assists in producing high levels of acculturation into the host community.

*Table 2.6 The international retirement migration settlement typology proposed by King et. al.*

	Nucleated	Spatially Diffused
Existing	Urban	Farm House
New	Urbanisation	Villa

(Source: King *et. al.*, 1998)

Nucleated living restricts high integration. A retiree’s past ties to Costa del Sol and Algarve usually stem from their relationship with ‘mass tourism’ (i.e. visitation during vacation), thus limiting the experience these retirees have to the indigenous culture during pre-retirement. Their dwellings are generally newly constructed and clustered around mass tourism destinations. Within these areas are found ‘ethnically orientated’ facilities and services. English retirees residing in Costa del Sol, for example, are provided with English pubs, clubs, restaurants, shopping centres, news, and television programs (Eaton, 1995). Therefore, these facilities limit the need to integrate locally and learn Spanish. However, not all expatriates in nucleated residences isolate themselves from the host community’s culture. Many only use their residence as a base for exploration to other areas (Gustafson, 2001; 2002).

Some studies have been completed solely on the seasonal movement of retirees in Europe. Gustafsson (1999 cited in Gustafson, 2002) estimated that anywhere between 25 000 and 35 000 Swedish retirees winter on the coast of Spain around the Costa del Sol and Costa Blanca areas each year. In addition, during the later half of the 1990s, over 40 000 Swedes, mostly retirees, were estimated to have residence in Spain. Yet, Spanish statistics in 1999 could only identify just over 8 500 Swedes permanently residing in Spain (Gustafson, 2001). This figure clearly

indicated a considerable discrepancy between the number of retired seasonal movers and retired permanent migrants to Spain. Gustafson (2002) noted that most Swedes living in Spain resided in areas which have Swedish shops, restaurants and services, similar to those identified by King *et. al.* (1998) in their study of retirees from the UK. Within these areas Swedish goods and services and even Swedish speaking doctors are readily available. However, the vast majority disassociate themselves from the mass tourism scene and considered themselves winter residents or travellers, and not tourists (Jacobsen, 2000; Gustafson, 2002).

Caravanning in Europe, and especially in the United Kingdom is growing in popularity. Caravanning is changing the landscape, especially when it occurs on a large scale. Space needs to be set aside at all destinations visited by large numbers of caravans and motor homes; hence, altering the landscape. A study by Southerton *et. al.* (1998) examined caravanning in the UK. They identified two types of caravan parks in the UK. The first type had ‘hard standing’ sites with all the facilities expected of a commercial caravan park such as washing facilities (i.e. laundry, shower, toilet), shop, gravel or paved roads, electricity, and street lights. Additionally, some individual sites within caravan parks are surrounded with hedge or shrub rows, dividing separate sites into uniform units. These types of caravan parks are generally run as a primary business venture by the owner. The second type of caravan parks are operated part-time and generally established as a means of acquiring a secondary or seasonal income. These caravan parks are generally owned by farmers who have set aside a section of their land to accommodate caravanners (Ilbery *et. al.*, 1997). The facilities within these caravan parks are generally basic, ranging from nothing more than the provision of a grassy area to park a caravan to a basic wash room. In some caravan parks, there is no uniform structure where caravans can be situated; they are placed randomly across the landscape. As most farmers are generally pre-occupied with farming, upgrading facilities is deemed a waste of time and capital: farmers see caravanners as just a supplementary ‘seasonal crop’. Farmers minimised capital investment in their caravan park, arguing that it was unnecessary to upgrade because many of today’s caravans are self contained with built-in facilities like showers and solar electricity. In addition, the rural setting of these caravan parks attracted many

caravanners in the first instance, as they were interested in experiencing the country lifestyle (Southerton *et. al.*, 1998).

### **2:4:3. North American Snowbirds**

The majority of the scholarly literature on aged seasonal movers has primarily focused on the North American snowbird. The favoured mode of movement for snowbirds in North America involves the use of recreational vehicles (RV) (i.e. referred to in Australia as caravans and motor home) and/or residing in RV Resort or mobile home parks (Mings and McHugh, 1989; McHugh and Mings, 1991; Smith and House, 2006). Mobile homes in North America are generally semi-permanent structures. Rylander (2001) estimated that each year over a million retirees from Canada and the northern United States undertake a move towards the southern United States and parts of Mexico during the northern hemisphere's winter.

Hoyt (1954) was one of the first geographers to examine the life of retirees living a seasonal lifestyle in caravan parks in the United States. However, the bulk of research into seasonal movement amongst the elderly started in the 1970s, and continues today. These studies analysed a wide range of characteristics of elderly seasonal movers. Some studies looked at the psychological motivation to partake in this type of activity. Mings and McHugh (1995), McHugh and Mings (1996) and Graves (2002) reported that escaping the harshness of the North American winter was a prime motive to relocate to a warmer climate. However, they also identified a strong social bonding amongst snowbirds. Many snowbirds consider that they live in two different types of communities and have two sets of friends (i.e. winter and summer). This seasonal bonding motivated snowbirds to winter in the southern states of the United States.

Researchers like Happel, Hogan and Pflanz (1988), Longino and Crown (1989), Marshall and Tucker (1990), Rylander (2001) and Happel *et. al.* (2002) examined the economic benefits or pitfalls that snowbirds brought to their winter destinations. Happel *et. al.* (2002) estimated that snowbirds spent approximately

US\$1 billion in Arizona in 2000-2001. Similar findings were identified by Rylander's (2001) study in Texas, with the average snowbird couple spending around US\$5 300 during their stay in that state. Longino and Biggar (1982) suggested that the levels and costs of services for the elderly, including seasonal movers, was less than that of younger demographics (i.e. infants, adolescence and young families). This influx of seasonal wealth aided in the development of many capital-works projects within these states. Furthermore, Marshall and Tucker (1990) and Martin, Hoppe, Marshall and Daciuk (1992) examined the pressures that snowbirds place on services, including medical facilities. The majority of health facilities appear not to be heavily impacted upon by the increased arrival of retired seasonal movers. Marshall and Tucker (1990) stated that Canadian snowbirds do not burden the health and social services during their stay in the southern United States. Once a major health issue occurred, Canadian snowbirds generally returned to Canada immediately. Similarly, many snowbirds from the northern part of the United States returned to their usual place of residence following a major medical issue (Monahan and Greene, 1982).

Steinnes and Hogan (1992) related seasonal movement to the strength of the housing market. They concluded that many older seasonal movers viewed their place of usual residence (i.e. family home) as an investment. Therefore, for investment reasons, these elderly seasonal movers did not wish to sell their family home in order to migrate permanently to a warmer climate, even though migrating to a region with lower housing and living costs was affordable. This study failed to address the issue of ties that elderly people developed to a destination in determining whether or not to migrate permanently. Sullivan (1985) highlighted that the ties to family, life-time friends and familiar surrounds was a strong bond that inhibited the desire to relocate permanently. Seasonal movement did not sever these ties and still permitted travel.

Greiner and Perigoe (1995) examined the types of communication networks used by Canadian snowbirds whilst wintering in Florida to stay in contact with their place of usual residence. Canadian snowbirds remained in constant contact with friends and family by telephone and email whilst wintering in Florida. Furthermore, a Canadian cable news service on television, the broadcast of Canadian news on local radio stations and the availability of Canadian newspapers assisted in informing them

about events occurring in Canada. Keeping in constant contact with friends and family, as well as access to Canadian news, lessened the impact of being away from their usual place of residence.

There has been a wealth of research done on the characteristics of American snowbirds. Demographically, the bulk of snowbirds are married, retired, financially secure, in relatively good health compared to non-movers, and with a high to moderate level of education (i.e. retired trade person and professional). In addition, the majority of snowbirds are Anglo-Celtic in ancestry (Krout, 1982; Monahan and Greene, 1982; Sullivan and Stevens, 1982; Sullivan, 1985; Hogan, 1987; Longino *et. al.*, 1991; McHugh and Mings, 1991; Hogan and Steinnes, 1993; 1994; Mings, 1997). All these studies on the demographics of snowbirds have been done in a similar spatial setting (i.e. large commercial trailer parks and mobile home parks). This focus has possibly created a bias in the data sets. However, some evidence suggests that less financially secure elderly are partaking in seasonal movement. Mings (1984) and later Hogan and Happal (2002) have identified a growing proportion of elderly who free camp for at least some part of the winter on public land on the outskirts of Phoenix, Arizona in camping sites like Dry Camp and Quartz-site. For these less financially secure elderly, saving on accommodation costs by free camping has made seasonal movement more affordable. Many of these snowbirds belong to the younger adventurous elderly (i.e. aged <65 years). The increased building of creature comforts (i.e. hot water systems, shower, toilets, solar power) within caravans and recreational vehicles (RV) lessens the need for many travellers to have stays at established RV parks (caravan parks) and makes free camping easier and more desirable. Further analysis on this type of movers is needed to understand the impact camping has on host communities and the local environment.

An implication of the seasonal movement of large numbers of retirees across North America is the transformation of the landscape surrounding host communities. For heavily visited destinations, this transformation has seen the rise of the so-called RV resort landscapes. These are large tracts of land on the periphery of large urban and/or tourist towns and cities, generally clustered together, dedicated solely for the use of caravans, mobile home and the provision of semi-permanent structures. Mesa

and Apache Junction (a suburb of Phoenix Arizona) in the late 1980s had a total of forty-one RV resorts (Mings and McHugh, 1989). Twenty-seven of them had the capacity to accommodate over three hundred caravans and mobile homes. In addition, there were thirteen RV resorts with over a thousand sites. The bulk of these RV resorts had few permanent residents and largely catered for transient visitors, predominantly snowbirds. In Australia, few caravan parks can cater for over three hundred clients at one time (RACQ, 2003). The size of these RV resorts indicates the volume of people undertaking seasonal movement in North America.

Mings and McHugh (1989:36) claimed “RV resorts are planned communities”. Their physical appearance is more akin to a contemporary suburban community, rather than ‘temporary encampments’ where streets and sites are laid out in regular patterns, with site sizes all being standardised. RV resorts are generally built around a community hall. The community hall serves as a meeting place for the resort’s clientele, where community activities are organised. In addition, it can act as a dance hall, dining area, music room, and pool hall, with many also providing the services of a library and post office (Mings and McHugh, 1989). Adjacent to the community centre are aqua facilities (i.e. pool) and sunning areas with many having lawn bowl greens and shuffleboard courts. As interaction between retirees is high, the RV resort type environment produces a strong social bonding amongst wintering retirees,. A strong social bonding between snowbirds is encourages to repeat visits to the same resort and leads to a permanency in winter population (i.e. snowbirds residing for the entire winter in one location year after year). The average length of stay in a RV resort is five months, with the majority of clientele returning year after year (Mings and McHugh, 1989).

In the United States, Mings (1989) identified the existence of a correlation between a snowbird’s place of usual residence and their winter destination, with very little movement occurring across the continent (i.e. more movement North-South than East-West or vice versa). Elderly seasonal movers from the east coast (e.g. New York) are more inclined to choose Florida as their winter resting place than the elderly from the western regions such as British Columbia in Canada, and Oregon and Washington State in the United States. The same pattern occurs in California, with the

majority of their seasonal elderly coming from similar longitudes (i.e. western states) and Texas and Arizona receive their seasonal elderly from states in the Mid-West like North and South Dakota (Gober and Mings, 1984; Mings, 1989; McHugh and Mings, 1991). Therefore, an apparent distance decay progression occurs amongst retirees seasonally moving to the southern parts of United States. In addition, this pattern supports Stouffer's (1940) conclusion that for people to move over a great distance the benefits at the distant destination must be deemed better than at a closer destination. In other words, retirees from New York need not travel to California when Florida can provide the same amenities.

Each year an increasing number of snowbirds are visiting the same destination. At many destinations this produces a permanent winter population for three to seven months of the year (Sullivan and Stevens, 1982; Mings and McHugh, 1989). This trend has created a strong social bonding within the snowbird community and with the destination. In Texas, an estimated sixty thousand RVs are actively participating in civic activities within community and church groups. Moreover, the development of a strong sense of community has occurred, with many snowbirds becoming politically active within their winter destinations. As their numbers grow, their 'political clout' becomes greater. Currently, politically active snowbirds in Texas are fighting for the right to vote in local political elections (Rylander, 2001). Whatever the outcome of the struggle to gain the right to vote at their winter residence, the vast number of snowbirds and the economic benefits they provide makes them a strong political force at all levels of government. If important issues for snowbirds are not addressed, they may change their choice of destination and "move to greener pastures" (Rylander, 2001:8). In Europe, a similar occurrence may be happening with international retirement migration in respect to EU elections. Expatriates can vote for members from their host country to represent them within the EU (King *et. al.*, 1998).

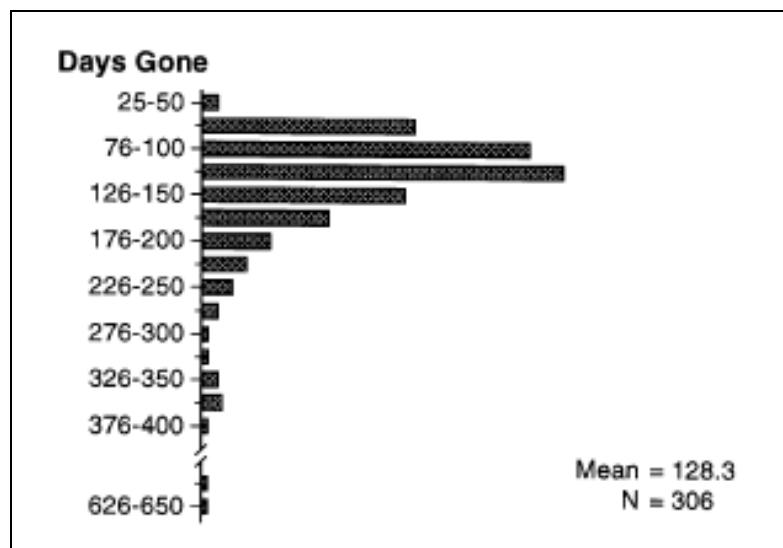
## 2:4:4. Australian Grey Nomads

The literature on Australia's population geography has not examined seasonal movement among elderly Australians in any depth. Some studies have been completed, primarily focusing on grey nomad demography, lifestyle, and drawing comparisons with them and North American snowbirds. However, most studies have discussed grey nomads from a tourism marketing view point, whilst incorporating them into the literature relating to aspects of the self-drive market or grey tourism (Prideaux, Wei and Ruys, 1999; Carson, Waller, and Scott, 2002; Laws and Scotts, 2003; Prideaux and Carson, 2003). No tourism-related studies have examined the mobility of grey nomads in any detail. Amongst the research that has explored non-tourism/marketing aspects of grey nomads, the most noteworthy studies have been conducted by Professor Robert Mings (1997), Heather Pollard (1996), Greiner *et. al.* (2003), Onyx and Leonard (2005; 2007), Onyx *et. al.* (2007), and Cridland (2003). These studies, in addition to other pertinent literature relating to grey nomads, will be presented in this section.

Mings (1997) drew comparisons between the North American snowbirds and the Australian grey nomads, focusing on the pursuit of recreational activities by grey nomads, their social interactions and their level of mobility. His study area incorporated the coastal destinations from Mission Beach to Mossman, and the Atherton Tablelands in Far North Queensland. From surveying grey nomads ( $n=306$ ) in caravan parks ( $n=41$ ), Mings concluded that demographically grey nomads were similar to snowbirds. He concluded that the majority of the grey nomads surveyed were middle income earners during their working years (e.g. skilled labourers; middle management positions). The mean age of Australian grey nomads, however, was 2-3 years younger (female 62.5 years, male 65.5 years) than their North American counterparts, possibly due to better retirement schemes available in Australia. This result was later confirmed by Cridland (2003). Mings revealed that rates of mobility vary between the two cohorts. Australian grey nomads were found to be more mobile, preferring to have numerous short stays at more locations, whereas snowbirds tended to stay at one location during the entire winter. If snowbirds travelled to numerous destinations, many would utilise one destination as a base for longer

excursions (e.g. one to four day trips). However, variations in mobility levels between individuals were noted, with some snowbirds being highly mobile and some grey nomads preferring to reside at one destination during the winter. Australian grey nomads would also spend less time away from their place of usual residence compared to North American snowbirds (see Figure 2.10). Snowbirds on average spent five to seven months at their winter destination, whereas grey nomads spent on average four months. This difference is possibly due to the severity of the North American winter compared to the more benign winters in Australia. Mings (1997) also concluded that the majority of grey nomads prefer to distance themselves from the organised/structured resort type locations and activities, compared to the majority of snowbirds. Onyx and Leonard (2005) also identified this difference in their study of grey nomads.

Mings (1997) concluded that the long-term social bonding amongst grey nomads was not as strong as the social bonding found amongst many snowbirds communities. This difference stems from the high level of mobility amongst grey nomads and the lack of activities provided for them in Australian caravan parks. Many trailer parks (including RV Resorts) in the United States cater solely for the needs of elderly seasonal movers. As mentioned previously, most trailer parks in the United States take on the characteristics of a small retirement village with facilities like a community hall, hair dressers, and a post office (Mings and McHugh, 1989). Australian caravan parks often lack these facilities. Factors that contribute to a strong social bonding amongst snowbirds are the levels of organised activity available to them within North American trailer parks. Organised activities such as, dance, aerobics and craft classes, games (i.e. cards and board games), tournaments and competitions (i.e. bowls and shuffleboard) bring individuals together. Moreover, research by Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996), Hay (1998), Jiven and Larkham (2003) and Stedman (2003) all concluded that promoting a strong community feeling will develop a strong sense of attachment to a destination. This strong attachment brings individuals back to the same location year after year (Corcoran, 2005). In the absence of these facilities and group activities, grey nomads must provide their own types of recreational pursuits (see Figure 2.11), which have contributed to their individuality and a higher level of mobility. Mings (1997) stated that these factors may have



*Figure 2.10. The average lengths of time grey nomads were absent from their place of usual residence.*

(Source: Mings, 1997)

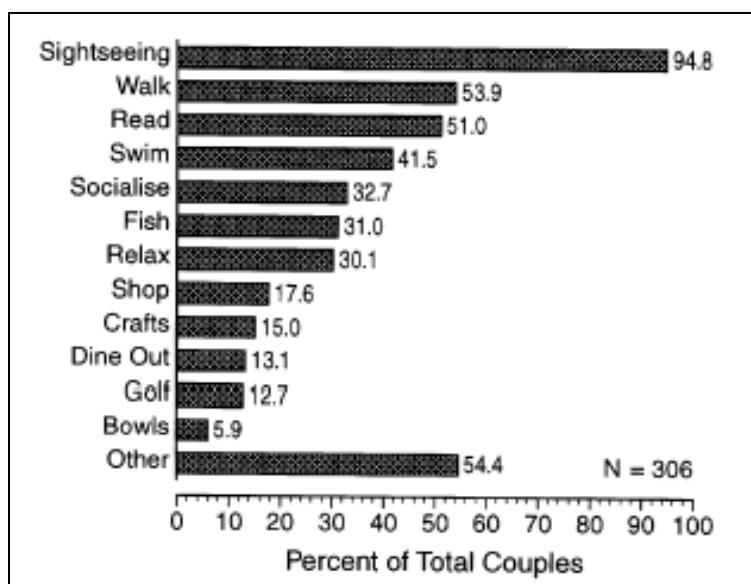


Figure 2.11. Activities grey nomads partake whilst visiting Far North Queensland  
(Source: Mings 1997)

inhibited the development of a close social bond amongst grey nomads and to a particular destination, in contrast to the strong social bonding observed amongst communities of North American snowbirds. Onyx and Leonard (2005) also identified this trend in their study of grey nomads.

Pollard (1996) compared the demographic characteristics between ‘aged in place’ retirees (i.e. retirees who have lived in an area during their working years and have grown old at that destination, and therefore have not moved to that destination), retired permanent migrants and elderly seasonal movers to the Hervey Bay region of Queensland. Demographically, Pollard’s findings for both grey nomad and aged permanent migrants were similar to the demography of their aged counterparts in the United States. She concluded that grey nomads were generally in better health and more financially secure than those elderly who ‘aged in place’ or permanently migrated to Hervey Bay. However, her mean age for grey nomads was somewhat older (77% were over 65 years) than Mings’ findings for Far North Queensland. This anomaly is possibly due to Pollard’s selection criteria for seasonal movers. She only interviewed grey nomads who were staying in Hervey Bay for a period of one month or more, while Mings did not place this constraint on his participants. Pollard may have inadvertently failed to identify a particular grey nomad demographic by excluding those grey nomads who only stay at locations for short durations (e.g. possibly the younger grey nomads). In addition, there was a high occurrence of ex-professionals in her study group.

Cridland (2003) examined the variation in mobility amongst caravanning grey nomads visiting coastal communities in northern Queensland. Cridland surveyed 244 grey nomads in twenty-six caravan parks along the North Queensland coast between Sarina Beach and Wonga Beach. He concluded that retirees new to the grey nomadic lifestyle tended to have higher levels of mobility (i.e. having short stays at numerous destinations) and this trend continued until approximately the fifth or sixth journey. After this point, a grey nomad’s mobility declined and longer stays at fewer destinations would occur. Furthermore, their choice of destinations in the early years of travel favoured large regional service/tourism towns or cities (e.g. Townsville; Cairns). As the number of visits to a region/destination increased, a grey nomad’s

length of stay at a particular destination would increase, with their preferred destination being small coastal townships within a short driving distance (approximately 50 to 80 km) of large regional service towns/cities (e.g. Midge Point 50 km from Proserpine). Time did not permit investigations to determine if these trends occurred at inland destinations or if movement patterns varied between Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland.

Mings (1997) stated that due to a grey nomad's high mobility and the lack of organised activities in caravan parks, the level of social interaction and bonding to other grey nomads is limited compared to North American snowbirds. This lack of interaction did not exclude them from developing close and meaningful relationships with other like-minded grey nomads. Onyx and Leonard (2005; 2007) argued that socially, grey nomads do develop complex and long lasting friendships with a select number of fellow travellers through constant interaction. However, they concluded that the level of social bonding and interaction between grey nomads residing at the one caravan park for the entire winter is often limited to a few close friends, whereas snowbirds may have a diverse knowledge of a large number of semi-permanent residing in their caravan park.

Mings (1997) concluded that there are some differences between snowbirds and Australian grey nomads. Onyx and Leonard (2005; 2007) and Onyx *et. al.* (2007) expanded this analysis by looking at factors that motivated this type of movement. While Onyx and Leonard identified the same demographic similarities as Mings (1997), the underlining motivation driving grey nomads to 'hit the road' each winter differed. Most grey nomads stated that escaping the winter cold is a prime reason for heading north (Cridland, 2003), similar to most North American snowbirds (Mings, 1997). However, Onyx and Leonard (2005:67) suggested that grey nomads are escaping, not just the cold but also, the "bureaucratic control of their previous employment as well as their consumption-driven, commercialised and homogenised former lifestyle". Karl Marx discussed in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844) the 'alienation' of the human spirit through forced labour. Marx stated that:

*'The fact that labour is external to the worker, does not belong to his essential being; that he therefore does not confirm himself in his work, but denies himself, feels miserable and not happy, does not develop free mental and physical energy, but mortifies his flesh and ruins his mind. Hence the worker feels himself only when he is not working; when he is working he does not feel himself. He is at home when he is not working and not at home when he is working. His labour is therefore not voluntary but forced, it is forced labour'* (Marx, 1844, cited in Penguin Classics, 1975: 326).

Years of ‘forced’ employment helped to cultivate a strong desire to break the shackles and the stringent rules society posed upon them during their working life. Upon retirement, grey nomads are free from these constraints and through travel they develop a sense of freedom and control over their lives, and lose that sense of ‘being put out to pasture’. Fostered by these strong desires, Onyx and Leonard (2007) concluded that many grey nomads seek and live an ‘Ulyssean lifestyle’. An Ulyssean philosophy dictates that travel in the middle and later adult years should be filled with new learning and growth experiences, fresh creative ventures and full of productivity (McGuire *et. al.*, 1996). Hence, a grey nomad’s trip is more than just escaping the cold: it is a spiritual trip into older age.

In the minds of many grey nomads, this type of travel is a form of reconnecting to Australia and Australiana; learning more about their country and themselves whilst living an adventure. Palmer (2000) was one of the first to explore the spirituality of grey nomads. Palmer (2000) drew comparisons between grey nomads travelling in the Kimberley region and the local Indigenous culture. He concluded that the ‘Aboriginality’ of Australian grey nomads could be seen in many aspects of their culture. He noted that grey nomads often spend hours sitting under trees and talking to group members and that their laid back attitude towards life was similar to Aboriginal people. In addition, Palmer (2000) suggested grey nomads need to travel, just as Aboriginal people need to go walk-about. Palmer (2000) stated that both types of movement, Indigenous and grey nomad, could be seen as a means of reconnecting to the land through experiencing and learning what it means to be Australian. Onyx and Leonard (2007) also argued that through extended winter journeys, grey nomads grew personally and felt part of the country. They stated that:

*“The longer they travel.....the more they notice and appreciate .....At one level it is about moving more slowly, relaxing, taking it*

*easy. But at a deeper level it is about an intensification of the senses, and an expansion of awareness of the country as a whole.....It is about personal development in a new form".* (Onyx and Leonard, 2007: 389)

Onyx *et. al.* (2007) examined the level of volunteering grey nomads undertake whilst travelling. They identified that the motivation for grey nomads to volunteer within a community was driven by a keen interest to learn about the way of life within their host community. Volunteer activities undertaken by grey nomads included historical preservation, including palaeontology and archaeological projects, talking to local school children, teaching short courses, land care activities, restoring community buildings and raising funds for local projects. Participating in these types of activities gave grey nomads a heightened sense of being productive in later life. Onyx and Leonard (2007) concluded that volunteer projects utilising grey nomads can benefit regional destinations, both socially and economically. In addition, grey nomads may help alleviate the skill shortages in regional Australia.

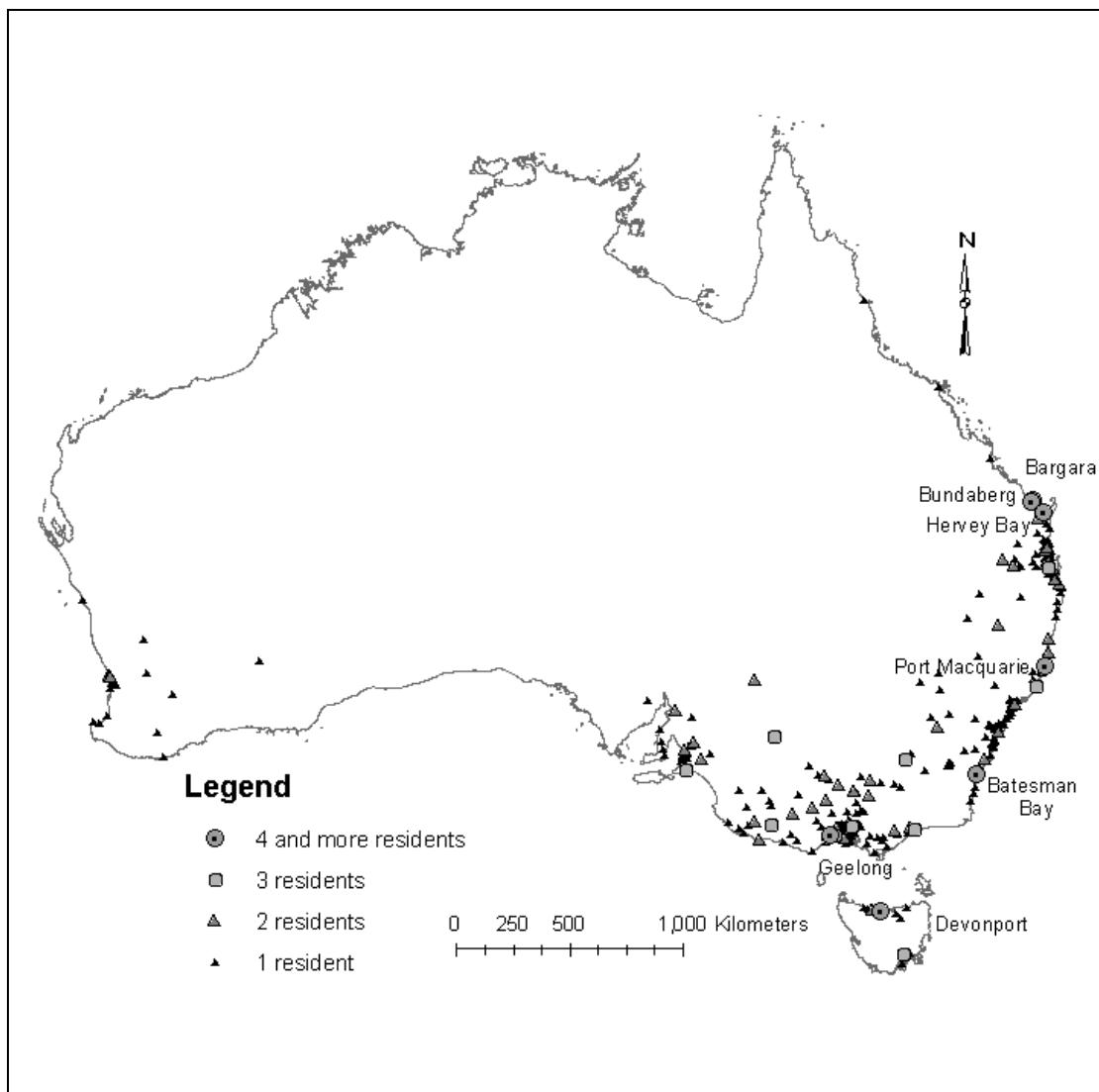
In the United States there have been numerous studies into the spatial patterns of a snowbird's place of summer residence and their choice of winter destinations (Gober and Mings, 1984; Mings, 1984; McHugh and Mings, 1991; McHugh *et. al.*, 1995). Evidence suggests that in North America there is a strong longitude correlation between place of usual residence and a snowbird's winter destination. In other words, the bulk of snowbird movement is north-south or vice versa, with instances of cross continental movement being low. This phenomenon in north-south movement appears to be the dominant directional movement amongst grey nomads. Pollard (1996), Mings (1997) and Cridland (2003) all ascertained that the bulk of seasonal moves to Queensland were from Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales, with only a small proportion coming from Western Australia (see Figure 2.12).

Cridland (2003) identified that a large proportion of grey nomads had their place of summer residence in regional areas of southern Australia, notably rural districts (e.g. Albury in New South Wales, Bendigo and Shepparton in Victoria) and favoured retirement locations (e.g. south and mid-north coast of New South Wales, Gippsland). Apart from Melbourne and Brisbane, the proportion of grey nomads from the southern capital cities was low. The reason for this low representation of

grey nomads from capital cities was possibly due to the high level of counter-urbanisation (e.g. sea change migrations) which has occurred amongst some retirees (Murphy and Zehner, 1988; Hugo 1989; Drysdale, 1991). However, this finding was not supported by Onyx and Leonard (2005), who concluded that approximately a third came from large urban centres. The bulk of residents from regional areas in Cridland's study stated they had made a move to their current permanent residence from a larger urban location (e.g. Melbourne, Sydney) just prior to retiring or post-retirement (see Figure 2.12).

The routes grey nomads' take whilst travelling are an important component of the overall journey. Some grey nomads may spend almost their entire journey travelling, whilst others will only spend the minimal amount of time in transit, choosing to reach their destinations as quickly as possible (Cridland, 2003). Therefore, identifying preferred routes that grey nomads take are fundamental in any study into grey nomad mobility. However, there have been few studies into the choice of routes taken by grey nomads. Mings (1997) and Cridland (2003) identified three patterns of routes taken by grey nomads to North Queensland: inland; coastal; and a combination of both coastal and inland. The majority of grey nomads visiting North Queensland took a combination of both inland and coastal routes. Cridland (2003) identified that the bulk of inland movement occurred during the late part of autumn and early winter when the temperatures in outback Queensland were favourable; high temperatures later in the year made travelling in outback Queensland unpleasant. How grey nomad movement patterns change over Northern Australia depending on the time of year is yet to be fully examined.

Over the last few years, many highways in Australia have become so-called theme routes (Olsen, 2003). These routes are usually promoted around a particular theme, image or idea (e.g. Matilda Highway is based on the idea of Banjo Patterson's Waltzing Matilda), in order to attract tourists to a particular region. Hardy *et. al.* (2003) examined the significance of theme routes (e.g. Matilda Highway, Savannah Way) in influencing a grey nomad's route choice. They concluded that most grey nomads placed little importance on the idea of theme routes and chose their routes in relation to the destinations they wished to visit. However, with increased promotion,



*Figure 2.12. Place of usual residence of grey nomads interviewed in Cridland's survey.*

(Source: Cridland, 2003: 85)

more grey nomads may begin to choose theme routes rather than destinations for their travel preference. How this change in preference will alter mobility patterns is unknown.

Research by Horneman *et. al.* (2002) looked at the characteristics of all elderly holidaymakers. Using the Joseph Banks Group (1984) marketing classification for the attitude and behavioural profile of elderly towards travel (see Table 2.7), they examined the correlation between varying classification and age groups. From their analysis they concluded that grey nomads fitted primarily into the ‘Pioneers’ classification, but had many characteristics of the ‘Aussie’ classification. However, with increased age many elderly travellers become ‘Conservatives’ in their approach to travel. These three classifications made up 80 per cent of all elderly holidaymakers, but grey nomads were an undisclosed proportion. Backman *et. al.* (1999) also identified that levels of mobility varied amongst the elderly, with the more mature elderly having longer stays at destinations than younger elderly. This phenomenon has not been fully examined in the case of grey nomads. However, some findings by Cridland (2003) appear to support Backman *et. al.’s.* (1999) argument.

## **2:5. The Economic Impact of Grey Nomads in Regional Australia**

Tourism creates employment and bolsters the economy of many destinations throughout Australia (Salma, 2001; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2003). However, the importance of tourism to a destination will greatly depend on its economic basis (i.e. manufacturing, agriculture, or tourism). Determining the benefits and the implications of grey nomads to Australia’s economy is difficult (Haxtun, 2007). Tourism Australia (2005) estimated that domestic senior tourists spent \$9.3 billion in 2004, accounting for 23 per cent of all domestic tourist expenditure. Grey nomad spending patterns are usually incorporated and examined within the literature addressing mainstream tourism and not addressed as a single entity. Until a method to determine the exact numbers of grey nomads travelling each year across Australia is formulated, understanding the full extent of their economic impact and the exact benefits they provide will remain problematic.

*Table 2.7. The attitudinal and behavioural profiles of elderly holiday makers*

<b>Segment</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Discriminator</b>
Enthusiasts	High energy, group forming, highly experiential, socially directed, young, free spenders	A place that attracts the right good-time party crowd
Big spenders	Older, passive, status conscious, outer directed, free spenders on ego enhancement, luxury loving, acquisitive, and materialistic	A place where you can take in the sights, dine in luxury, and have first-class entertainment
Pioneers	The main trend-setting group, inner directed, individual, active, avoids commercial ventures, committed environmentalists and conservationists. Well educated and free spenders	A place where tourists rarely go, where you can pioneer new places, people and experiences
Conservatives	Older, passive, conservative, home bound, lack confidence, group travel, and cautious spenders	A reliable package tour that covers all the best spots
Indulgers	A trend setting group. Passive, individual, inner directed, well educated, free spenders on self-indulgence, food and wine conscious, stylish, conservationists and environmentalists at heart.	An exclusive retreat with great local food and wine
Aussie	Active, adventurous, group (family) travellers, outer directed, sporting enthusiasts, older, cautious spenders	A place with a real Aussie family environment

(Source Joseph Banks Group, 1984 cited in Horneman *et. al.*, 2002)

Economically, domestic tourism is more important to regional areas than international tourism. Johnson (2000) estimated that \$43 billion was spent in 1998 by Australians on domestic travel (\$10.2 billion on daytrips and \$32.8 on overnight trips). Of the \$43 billion, \$24.8 billion was spent in regional Australia, as opposed to \$18.2 billion in capital cities. In comparison, international tourists during the same year only spent \$2.3 billion in regional Australia (Cook 2001). As Johnson (2000:56) explained: “Domestic visitors are more likely to travel to regional Australia than international visitors and as a result regional Australia benefits considerably from domestic tourism”. This highlights the importance domestic tourism has for the economies of regional locations across Australia.

In 2003/04, Ipalawatta *et. al.* (2005) calculated that 9.3 million individuals spent at least one night in an Australian caravan park. Hence, this figure equates to a total of 76.3 million nights, at a total cost of \$1.3 billion in accommodation expenses alone. They also estimated that 35 per cent of nights spent in caravan parks were taken by individuals over the age of 55 years. This number is less than the CIA’s (2002) estimates for the number of elderly using caravan parks; however, this figure was taken over a full year and does not highlight any seasonal movement. Ipalawatta *et. al.* (2005) indicated that the highest instance of caravan parks usage occurred during the months of January, April and October. During this time, and especially in the month of January, the usage of caravan parks by the over 55 years was extremely low compared to other age groups.

The nature of visitation (i.e. long or short stays) can determine the level of positive or negative impacts tourists have on a destination. McKercher (2001) analysed the economic benefits between short-term/stop-over (i.e.  $\leq 3$  days) tourists and long-term (i.e.  $> 3$  days) holidaymakers in Albury on the border of New South Wales and Victoria. He concluded that short-term/stop-over tourists produced more tourist dollars for a destination than long-term stayers. Short-term/stop-over tourists had a tendency to visit as many tourist sites as possible during their short time at their chosen destination, utilising the services of tourist operators. Long-term tourists tended to fill in their time with more recreational pursuits such as fishing and golf.

Studies Undertaken by Greiner *et. al.* (2003; 2004) found that tourists visiting remote communities, such as the Carpentaria Shire in Far North Queensland, may not provide substantial economic benefits compared to the amount of services consumed. Greiner *et. al.* (2004) identified that long stay retirees, mostly grey nomads (average length of stay 10.5 weeks) visiting the Carpentaria Shire had a daily expenditure of \$30.30/individual, compared to singles and families who stay for one-two weeks and spent \$61.63 and \$41.94/individual, respectively. On average, visitors to Queensland spend \$109.11/day. Therefore, a visitor's daily expenditure in the Carpentaria Shire is less than half of the state's average.

Greiner *et. al.*, (2003; 2004) concluded that the majority of grey nomads consume services but the money they inject into the local economy is less than the cost of the services they consume. They concluded that during the winter months, water shortages and problems relating to the disposal of waste produced major difficulties for the Carpentaria Shire. The cost of providing services to tourists in the Carpentaria Shire was \$14.1 million, but they only injected \$11 million into the local economy. Grey nomads are generally self-sufficient, rarely dining out in restaurants and eating takeaway food (Greiner *et. al.*, 2004). Many short-stay grey nomads (i.e. those who stay less than a week) usually stock up with supplies prior to arriving in Karumba, limiting the need to buy groceries locally. In addition, fishing is the dominant tourist activity in the Karumba area with large numbers of grey nomads carrying boats, thereby limiting the need to utilise fishing charters. Furthermore, patient numbers at the Normanton Hospital triple during the peak season between April and September, creating problems of understaffing and overcrowding (Gulf Regional Planning Advisory Committee, 2000). Destinations, especially in regional Australia, need to be aware of the nature and type of visitors that they are attracting. However, Greiner *et. al.* (2004) concluded that most residents of the Carpentaria Shire considered grey nomads and tourism to be a major money spinner and good for the region.

In contrast, the township of Mitchell in central western Queensland is a prime example of an en-route destination which is receiving the benefits of grey nomad movement (Kennedy, 2006). The town is now rapidly becoming an important stop on

the tourist route within Outback Queensland. The only main physical attraction at Mitchell is the ‘Great Artesian Spa Pools’. To promote visitation, the council-run caravan park at Mitchell provides an incentive of a free nights accommodation (i.e. stay two nights get the third night free) for all visitors wishing to stay for longer than one night (Action Graphic Queensland, 2001; Queensland Outback Holidays, 2003). Cridland (2003) concluded that a large proportion of grey nomads travelling on inland routes in Queensland visited Mitchell at least once during each journey, and their usual length of stay was three to four nights. During their stay in Mitchell, grey nomads purchased fuel and groceries, providing an economic benefit for small businesses. Prior to this enticement, Mitchell was only a quick stop-over destination or a place that was by-passed by grey nomads.

For many Australian regional centres, employment from tourism, either directly or indirectly, is important for their economic survival. Johnson *et. al.* (2001) from the Bureau of Tourism Research (now Tourism Australia: hereafter TA) examined the reliance on tourism (i.e. international, domestic, overnight, day visitors) for employment in four locations in Australia: two urban centres - Geelong in Victoria and Perth in Western Australia; and two regional locations - the Katherine region in the Northern Territory and the South Coast of New South Wales. By estimating the total expenditure of tourists to the input and output of itemised commodities (e.g. food, fuel, and accommodation) and matching them to the total domestic output of a select industry, the researchers estimated the share of tourist-related jobs for that industry. They concluded that both regional areas were more reliant on tourism for employment (both full time and part-time) than the larger urban centres (see Table 2.8). Tourism generated 9.1 per cent and 14.1 per cent of employment in the Katherine and the south coast of New South Wales, respectively. In contrast, tourism only contributed to four per cent of the total employment in Perth and just over five per cent for Geelong. The Australia Bureau of Statistics (2007a) has estimated that approximately 6 per cent of Australia’s employment is generated through tourism. Hence, tourism does produce employment and if regional destinations can promote, develop and increase their tourist base, employment opportunities will also increase, benefiting small businesses in regional Australia (Corcoran *et. al.*, 1999; Salma, 2001).

Tourism Australia (2006a) estimated that the caravanning and camping segment of Australia's self-drive tourism market spent approximately \$6.5 billion in 2006. Moreover, Impalawatte *et. al.* (2005) calculated how much caravanners contributed to different industry segments. They concluded that during 2003/2004 caravanners spent approximately \$730 million on visiting restaurants and provided \$316 million to transport and storage companies. Caravanners also spent in the vicinity of \$227 million in the retail sector and \$124 million on recreational services. They also estimated that approximately 18 900 individuals within the hospitality industry (i.e. accommodation, café and restaurants) are directly employed because of visiting caravanners. In addition, they stated that caravanners also provide employment for over 13 500 individuals within the retail sector and 4 700 individuals in transport and storage industries. The exact figures on just how many of these individuals are employed due to grey nomads are unknown.

*Table 2.8. Comparison of tourism-based employment and tourism expenditure between large urban centres (i.e. Perth - Geelong) and two regional areas (i.e. NSW South Coast – Katherine Region)*

	Employment due to Tourism (%)	Average Expenditure Per Visitor (\$)	Tourism Expenditure to Produce 1 Job (\$ 000)
Perth	4.0	648	100-114
Geelong	5.4	152	96-114
NSW South Coast	14.1	277	133-155
Katherine Region	9.1	317	101-104

(Source Johnson *et. al.*, 2001)

In November 2006, the Australian Government launched the '*National Road Tourism Strategy*' (TA, 2006b). The goal of the strategy was to promote and enhance drive tourism in regional Australia. The strategy proposed to develop and/or sealing new roads/routes like the Red Centre Way, linking Alice Springs to Uluru and Kings Canyon, allowing greater caravan and motor home access to once remote localities. Allowing greater access will promote additional visitation, creating business and employment opportunities, as well as increasing the amount of expenditure in once rarely visited destinations/communities.

## 2:6. Discussion

Circular mobility is not a recent phenomenon: pre-historic humans partook in seasonal movement (i.e. following availability of food sources) as a matter of survival (Fagan, 1998:16). However, the recreational seasonal movement amongst the elderly in large numbers has occurred only recently. Throughout the economic boom period of the post Second World War era, the intervening obstacles imposed (i.e. cost of travel, the accessibility of location, time to travel) on elderly movement have been diminishing, allowing the elderly to become more mobile. For the purpose of this study, a grey nomad's mobility is related to a compilation of movement characteristics. These are the average distances travelled to arrive at destinations and whilst at a destination, the number of destinations visited throughout their trip, choice of destination, length of their trip, and the duration of stay at destinations.

Due to the lack of information on grey nomads, the knowledge on their movement patterns and difference in population characteristics is incomplete. Even though the population geography literature has reported differences in population characteristics amongst grey nomads, such as age and retirement income, the majority of tourism planning related literature has treated them as a homogenous group. While most studies into grey nomads have recognised differences in their socio/economic and demographic status, none have attempted to categorise them into sub-populations in accordance to their population characteristics and their mobility. In addition, as mentioned earlier, the majority of studies have focused primarily on grey nomads travelling to a single region and residing in caravan parks. This leaves gaps in the current knowledge regarding population and mobility differences between those grey nomads who prefer to camp as opposed to those who reside primarily in caravan parks. Examination of their movement patterns across multiple regions also need to be explored. Figure 2.13 shows the level of current knowledge regarding grey nomads. The grey shaded boxes are areas where the current knowledge regarding the grey nomad population and their mobility is limited or none existent. These areas form the focus of this study. Analysis of the differences in population traits, mobility and factors that influence mobility will provide greater insight into the grey nomad phenomenon and further the current understanding regarding their movement patterns

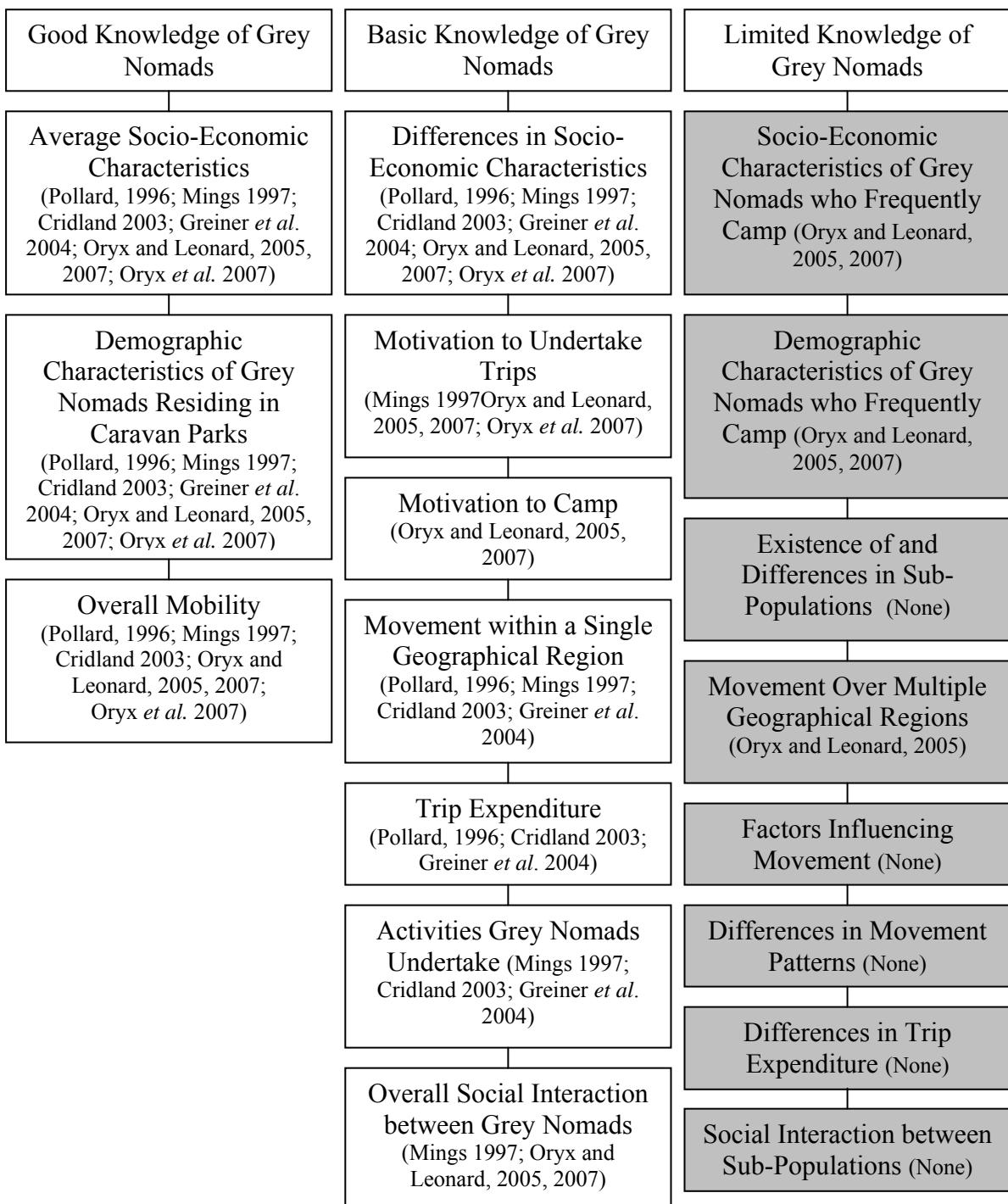


Figure 2.13. Charts showing the level of current knowledge regarding grey nomad population characteristics. (Source: created by Author)

to Northern Australia.

The majority of literature examining grey nomad population characteristics has not attempted to categorise grey nomads into sub-populations or explain how any differences influence movement patterns. Figure 2:14 shows the possible differences and/or similarities within the grey nomad population and how they may interact to influence movement patterns. Characteristics where grey nomads vary include the type of vehicles they travel in, level of retirement income, age, the types of activities they prefer to undertake, number of past trips taken since retiring, health and choice of destinations. All these different factors can be interwoven and may influence the level of mobility. Only rudimentary studies have been done on trying to determine if variations exist in grey nomad movement patterns. Demographically, it appears that grey nomads are similar to North American snowbirds (Mings, 1997). However, as Mings (1997) stated, the level of mobility between the two cohorts varies noticeably and the bonding between a snowbird's winter friends and their winter destinations appears to be far stronger than that developed by grey nomads. This observation raises questions about the relevance of literature regarding mobility and social interaction of snowbirds in relation to grey nomads. For this reason more research into grey nomads is needed.

A number of gaps exist in the knowledge relating to the movement of grey nomads. Pollard's (1996), Mings' (1997) and Cridland's (2003) research only covers one distinct regional area (Pollard: Hervey Bay; Mings: Far North Queensland; Cridland: Coastal North Queensland). To truly understand the movement pattern of grey nomads a multi-regional analysis is required. No in-depth analysis has been done on the movement of grey nomads in relation to their place of usual residence on a continental scale and whether regional climatic conditions dictate directional flow of movement. Furthermore, little is known about the variations in the mobility patterns of grey nomads whilst en route to their chosen destination.

A slight anomaly exists in the mean ages of grey nomads in Pollard's (1996) study to the results reported in both Mings' (1997) and Cridland's (2004) research. This difference in age may be attributed to different survey methodologies. Pollard

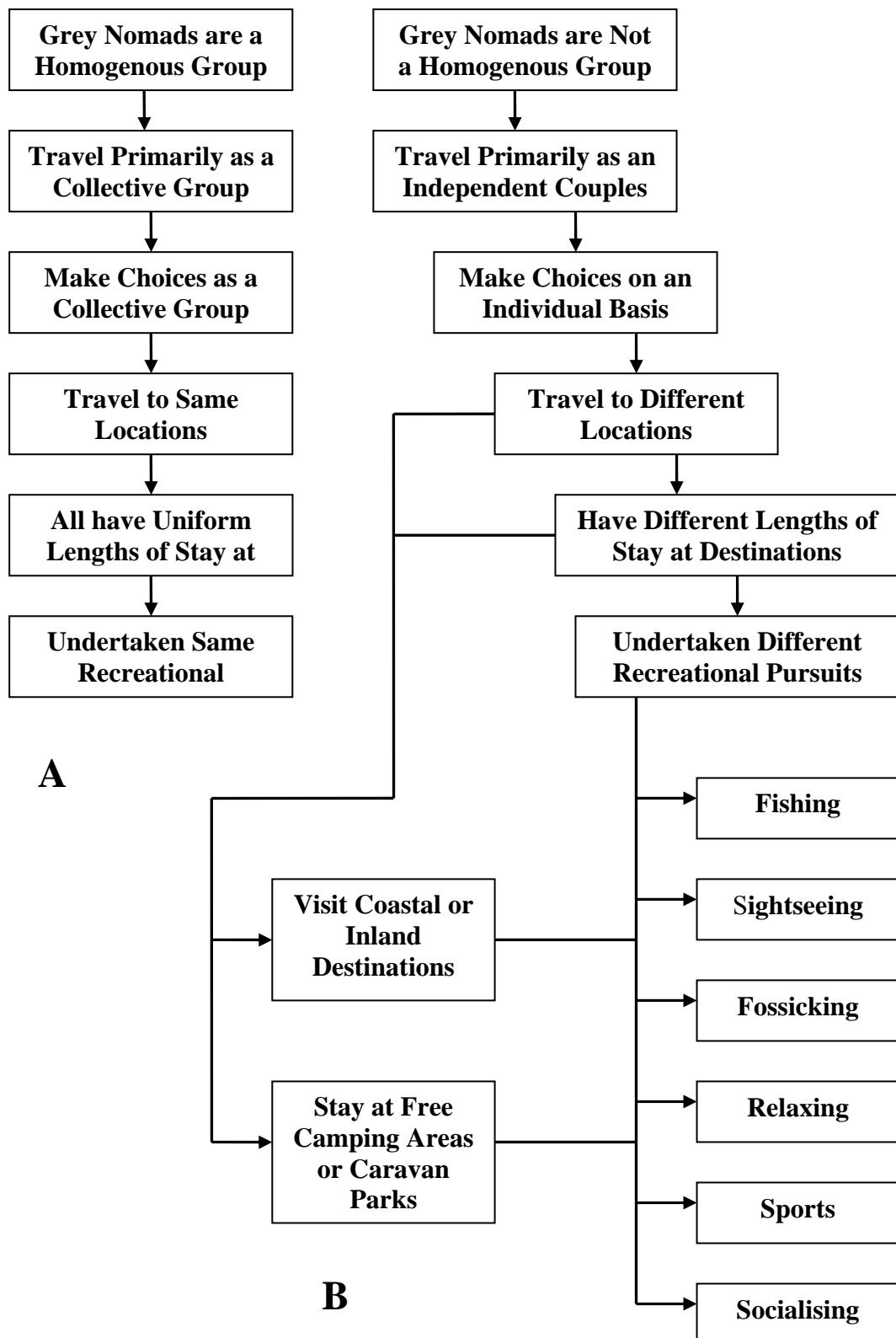


Figure 2.14. Charts showing possible reasons why grey nomads are not a homogeneous group. Chart A showing a homogenous population and chart B possible differences within the population. (Source: created by Author)

(1996) only surveyed those grey nomads staying in Hervey Bay for one month or more, failing to identify those grey nomads with higher levels of mobility. Could these short-stay highly mobile retirees comprise primarily the younger aged grey nomads (i.e. 50-64 years)? Mings (1997) and Cridland (2003) did not place the same temporal constraint on length of stay at a single destination. Furthermore, Backman *et. al.* (1999) proposed that mobility levels amongst the elderly will begin to decline with age. Hence, Pollard may have biased her data set in failing to survey the younger grey nomads who may be more mobile. This anomaly may suggest the existence of a rudimentary relationship between age and distance decay and/or a decline in the number of destinations visited, as Mings' (1997) and Cridland's (2003) studies were in tropical North Queensland, a long distance from southern Australia. Thus, older grey nomads may choose not to travel the additional distance to visit destinations in North Queensland when similar conditions and amenities can be sought in warm sub-tropical regions.

Horneman *et. al.* (2002) claimed that attitudes towards travel changes as elderly people age. Thus, it is possible that the movement patterns of grey nomads will also change as they age. More elderly grey nomads, unlike their younger counterparts, are less likely to partake in expensive journeys to local tourist attractions (e.g. trips to the Great Barrier Reef), as they would have visited these locations on previous journeys. Therefore, the need to choose a destination close to the departure point to large tourist attractions (i.e. generally large regional centres) would not be necessary. This possibility may produce a reduction in the economic benefits to particular destinations dependant on tourist dollars, as more grey nomads visit North Queensland, but fail to visit major tourism sites.

Cridland (2003) hypothesized that with an increase in age and repeat visitations to coastal North Queensland, a grey nomad's mobility would alter. He concluded that age only slightly influenced mobility, whereas the number of past visits was the greater determining factor in altering the number of destinations visited and their length of stay at their chosen destinations. Grey nomad movements he reported, would begin to slow after about the fourth journey, whereby they would become more selective in destinations visited and begin to have longer stays at their

preferred destinations. Moreover, he identified that small coastal towns became important destinations for grey nomads who have revisited North Queensland on numerous occasions since retirement. How this relates to mobility patterns in Western Australia and the Northern Territory, where the choice of destinations is not as great, had not been examined before 2005. This project will endeavour to test whether age or previous visitation to an area changes the patterns on mobility across all of Northern Australia. Figure 2.15 is a model adapted from Cridland's 2003 hypothesis on the changes in mobility amongst grey nomads with age and repeat visitations to a region.

Most studies of grey nomads have been done in a coastal or near coastal setting. The movement patterns of grey nomads at inland destinations have not been fully examined. The only examination of grey nomads visiting inland destinations was an ethnographic study conducted by Onyx and Leonard (2005; 2007), where they examined the grey nomad culture. Little is known about the movement patterns of grey nomads visiting inland destinations and whether or not it differs from grey nomads visiting coastal destinations. Additional questions requiring investigation are: do grey nomads travelling on inland routes base themselves at an inland destination and venture out on lengthy day trips or do they try to visit places of interest whilst in transit. Therefore, is inland Australia used just as a transit area to get to a coastal destination by grey nomads or is it all part of the journey?

Movement patterns on the west coast of Australia have not been fully examined. In North America, there is a strong longitudinal correlation (north/south movement) between a snowbird's place of usual residence and their preferred winter destination (Gober and Mings, 1984). A similar occurrence on the Australia's east coast was noted by Pollard (1996), Mings (1997) and Cridland (2003), with the majority of grey nomads touring Queensland coming from Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales. A similar pattern may exist on Australia's west coast, with retirees from southern Western Australia making up the bulk of grey nomads touring northern Western Australia, although this trend needs to be established. The characteristics of grey nomads venturing to the Northern Territory have not been examined in any detail.

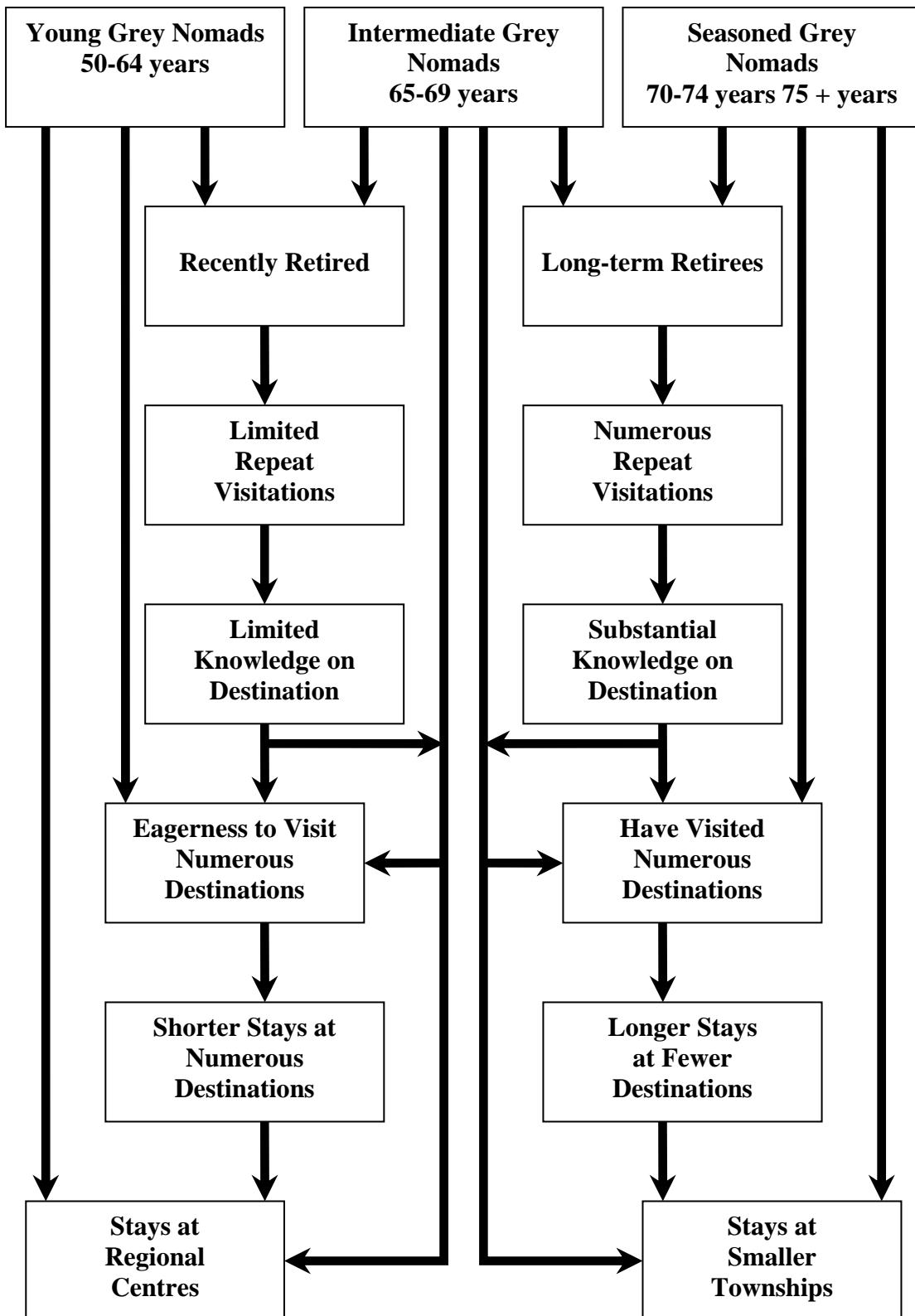


Figure 2.15. Cridland's simplified hypothesis model on how age and past visitation affects the mobility of grey nomads visiting coastal North Queensland.  
(Adapted From Cridland, 2003)

Mobility levels on the west coast may vary from those found on the east coast. Major settlements (e.g. Broome, Exmouth, Dampier) on the northern coast of Western Australia and the Northern Territory are widely dispersed. In some instances travellers may have to travel hundreds of kilometres to find a suitable location to stay. In contrast, destinations on the east coast are not as widely dispersed. Figure 2.16 is a model of a possible hypothesis on the mobility variation between the east and west coasts of Australia. Due to the greater distances between destinations and a limited choice of destinations, a higher proportion of grey nomads visiting the coast of Western Australia have a longer stay and reside at fewer destinations than their counterparts travelling on the east coast of Australia. Easily accessible coastal destinations in the Northern Territory are also limited. Hence, destinations in these areas that are accessible tend to have a high proportion of long staying grey nomads. However, some small remote destinations en route may act as transit/overnight stopover destinations between primary destinations. Moreover, the greater distances between destinations in Western Australia and the Northern Territory may also produce a high incidence of free camping amongst visiting grey nomads. Additionally, the amount of kilometres travelled in a day to arrive at a primary destination and once at a primary destination may be greater than that travelled on the east coast of Australia due to the distance between destinations. The answers to these questions will help planners identify what particular services or infrastructure needs to be established and where they should be located.

Murphy and Zehner (1988), analysed the satisfaction of permanent retired migrants with their choice of retirement location and concluded that the highest level of satisfaction was with smaller locations away from larger regional centres. The same analogy could apply to grey nomads and their choice of destination. Finding the most satisfying destination to stay would be a prime concern for most grey nomads. Perhaps the older grey nomads with more nomadic experience have developed a greater knowledge about where to stay, compared to the younger less experienced cohorts? This knowledge would stem from past visitation to small towns on day trips from the larger regional centres. The younger less experienced grey nomads, not knowing these small towns, would reside in the large regional centres and branch out on day trips to these neighbouring townships. Hence, increasing their knowledge of

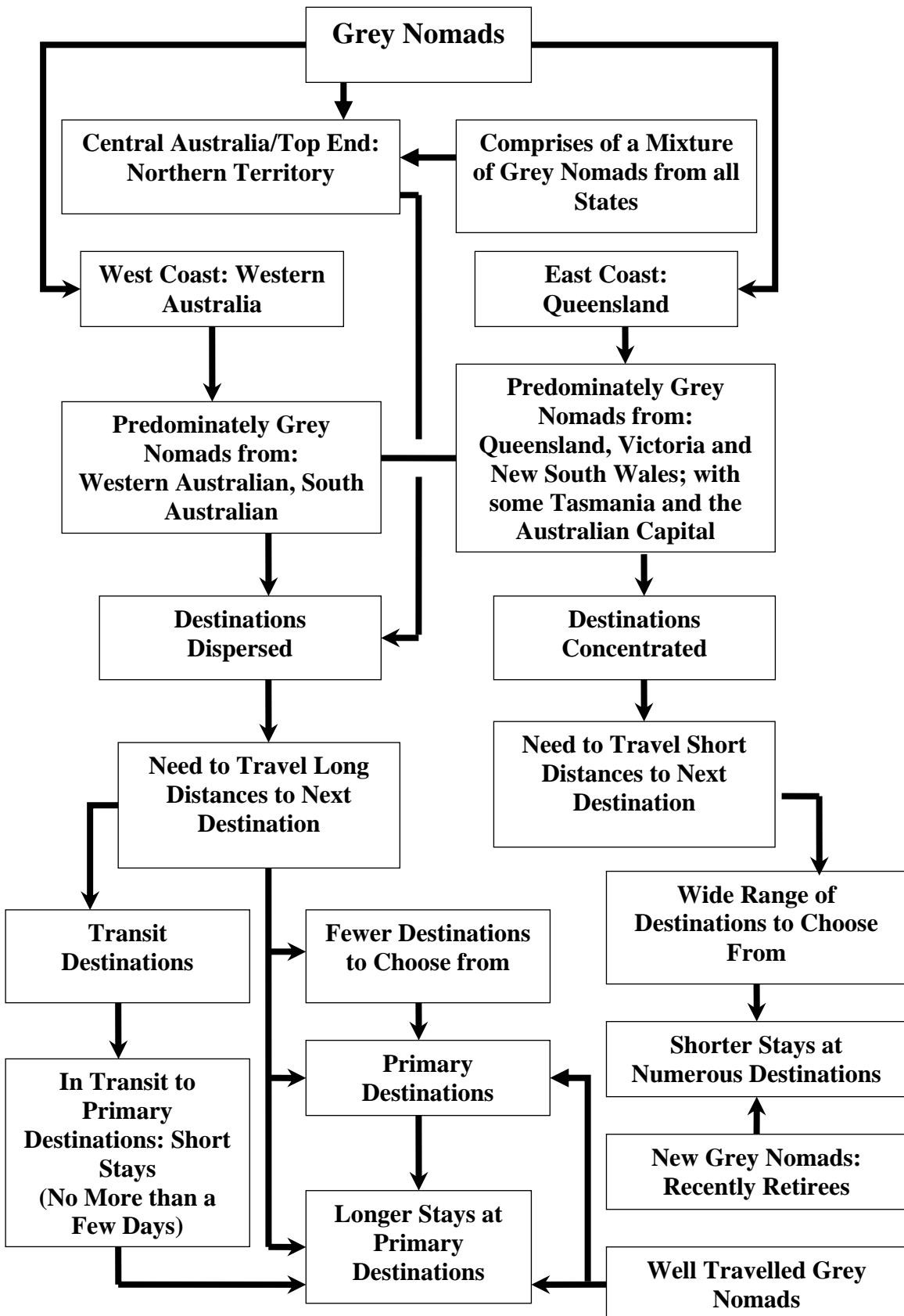


Figure 2.16. A model of the possible variation in mobility between the west and east coast of Australia.

possible future prime destinations. If a small town's location was deemed to have sufficient amenities to provide a high level of satisfaction, then it could be fair to assume that during each annual pilgrimage that location would be a logical choice in destination, especially as vacancies in the larger centres becomes more difficult to obtain.

## 2:7. Conclusion

This chapter has examined a number of migratory theories and movement patterns in Australia and the United States since World War Two. In addition, movement patterns of retirees in Europe, North America and Australia have also been examined. The majority of grey nomad movements are best described by the push-pull theory, with the cold of winter in southern Australia pushing grey nomads away and the warmth of northern Australia acting as a pull factor. Furthermore, both Stouffer's (1940) intervening opportunities and Lee's (1966) intervening obstacles are apt processes for determining how and the reasons why grey nomads move. The economic boom period after World War Two saw the decrease in the number of intervening obstacles preventing free seasonal movement. Improvements in road networks, health care, retirement schemes and the addition of creature comforts within accommodation types, especially in caravans and motor homes, have contributed to the increase in elderly mobility. However, the specifics pertaining to grey nomadic movement patterns are relatively unknown.

A considerable amount of literature exists on elderly seasonal movement in North America, but only a handful of studies have been completed on Australian grey nomads. Pollard's (1996), Mings' (1997), Cridland's (2003), Onyx's and Leonard's (2005, 2007) and Onyx *et. al.*'s. (2007) studies concluded that the demography of the snowbirds and grey nomads may be similar, but Mings believed that this feature is where the congruence ends. Mobility and interpersonal relations between fellow Australian grey nomads differ in comparison to their North American counterparts, thus rendering part of the literature on snowbird movement irrelevant in the case of grey nomads. The relationship between mobility, destination choice, age and grey

nomadic experience is yet to be fully established. To date no comparison has been done on the mobility of grey nomads travelling on inland routes verses coastal routes. In addition, little is known on how mobility will vary in areas where destinations are few and widely dispersed, like the Northern Territory and northern Western Australia. Hence, this study will fill the major gaps in the knowledge on spatial and temporal movement of grey nomads and how mobility alters as a grey nomad becomes older and/or undertakes repeat winter visits to destinations across northern Australia.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Study Area**

#### **3:1. Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to present information regarding sections of Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory that comprise the study area of this thesis. Information contained in this chapter will provide the reader with an understanding of the physical characteristics (e.g. climate) that attract retirees to northern Australia for multiple month stays during winter. In addition, this chapter will also highlight the economies and the demographic growth of regions surveyed across northern Australia, showing that the seasonal influx of grey nomads is vital to the economies of many remote centres.

#### **3:2. The Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Study Area**

The study area for this project encompassed a variety of destinations from large cities, small towns situated inland and on the coast, and remote localities across northern Australia above the Tropic of Capricorn ( $23^{\circ}5'$  S) (see Figure 3.1). This area incorporates the northern parts of Western Australia and Queensland and the majority of the Northern Territory. The study area covers in excess of 3 million km<sup>2</sup> or approximately 39 per cent of Australia's land mass. Marked differences exist throughout northern Australia in population characteristics (i.e. size and growth), climate and economies. This section will discuss the regional variation in the population and economies that comprises the study area for this project.

##### **3:2:1. Western Australia**

The areas of Western Australia involved in this study include the Australian Bureau of Statistics Statistical Divisions of the Gascoyne, Pilbara and the Kimberley (ABS, 2003). This area covers approximately 1 070 351 km<sup>2</sup> of Australia's land mass

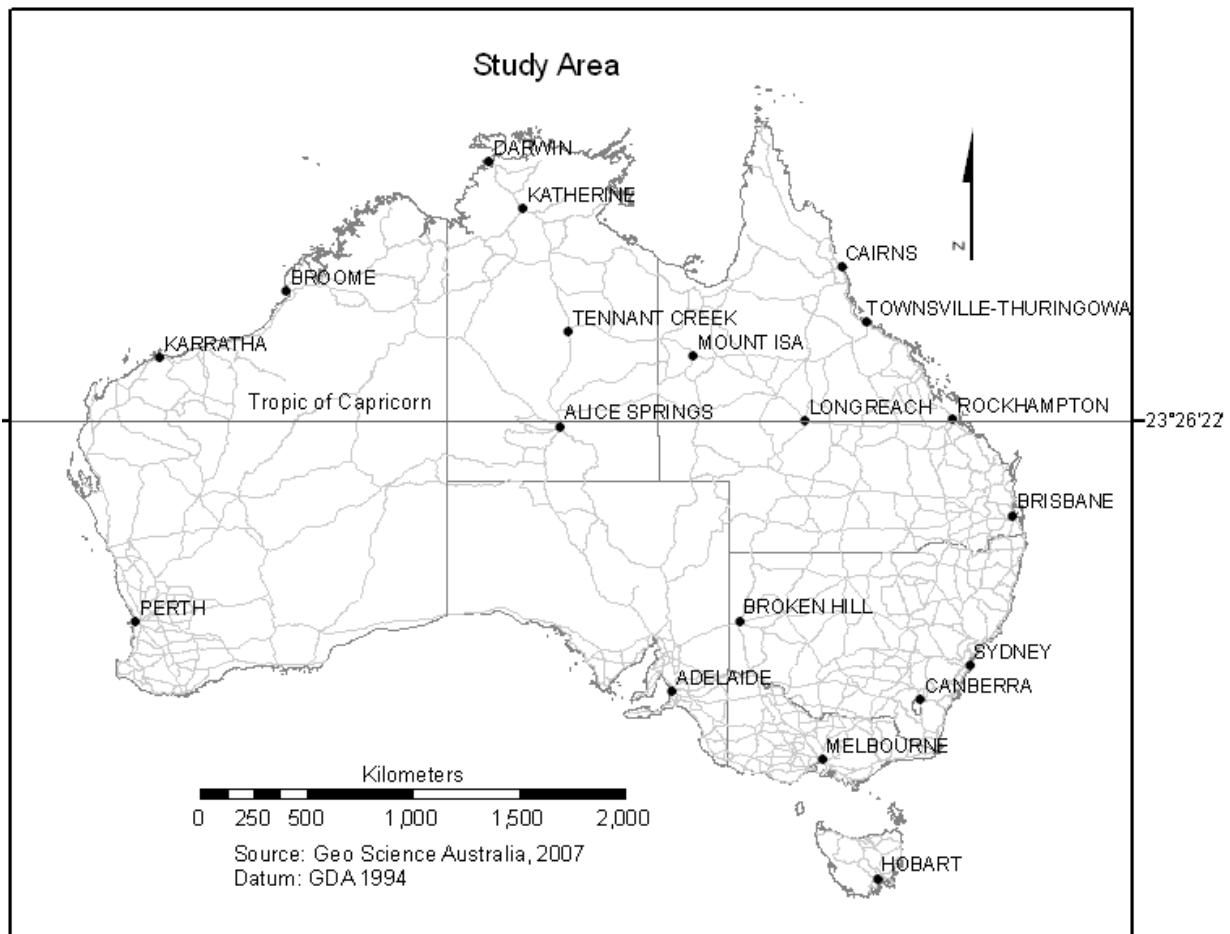
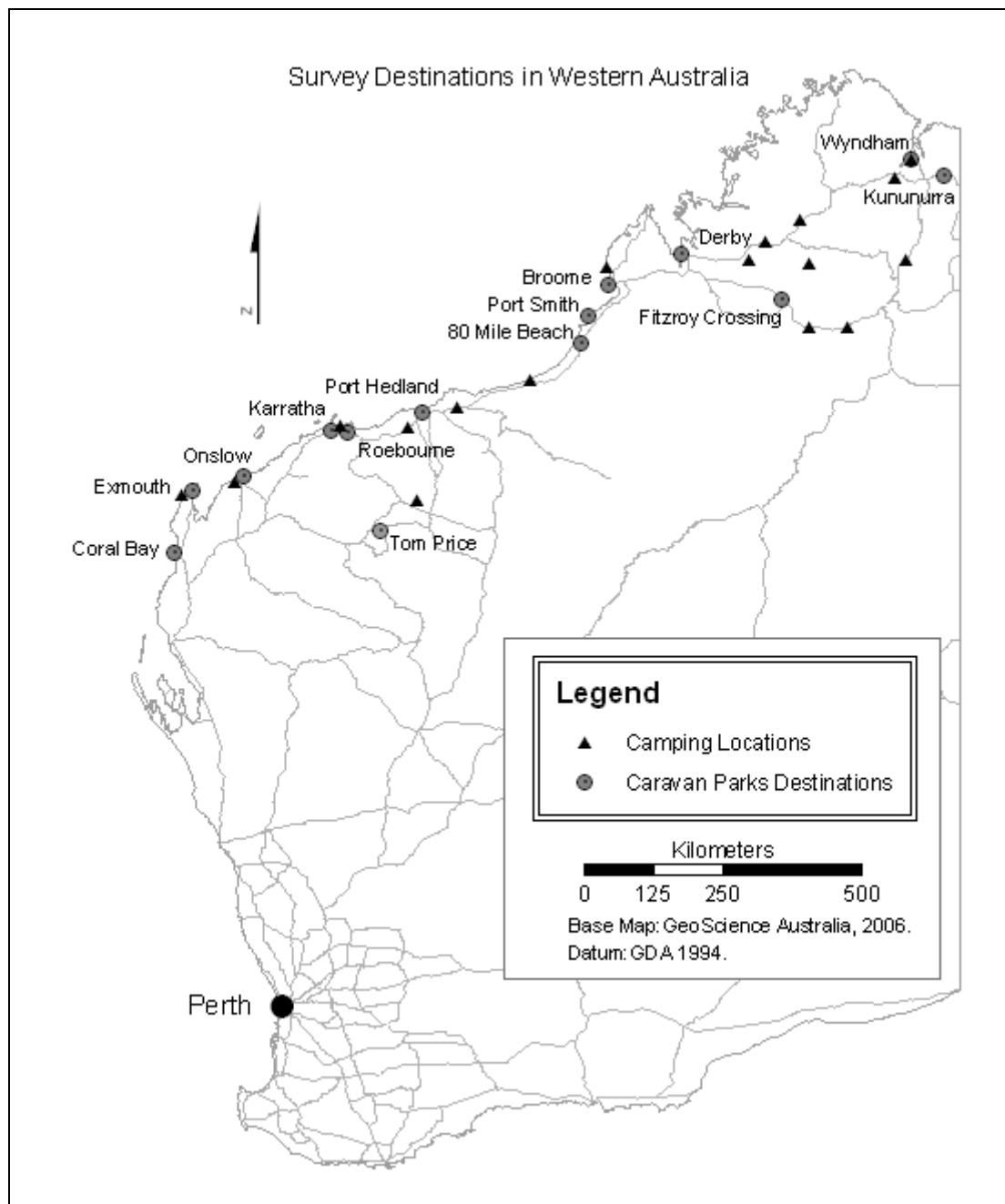


Figure 3.1. The study area, north of the Tropic of Capricorn and current highway/road networks. (Creator: Cridland, 2007)

(see Figure 3.2). The majority of the landscape and environment of these regions range from the arid deserts to semi-arid tropical savannah, with small isolated pockets of tropical rainforests.

The three regions have a combined population in excess of 84 000 individuals (Gascoyne, 9 928; Pilbara, 39 229; Kimberley, 34 924), most of which are concentrated in the cities of Kununurra, Broome, Karratha, and Port Hedland (ABS, 2006c; 2006d, 2006e). Away from these cities, the population is sparsely distributed in isolated communities, mainly due to the aridness of these regions. The population of all three regions is predicted to grow between 0.5 per cent and 2 per cent annually over the next 25 years on the back of major capital works, particularly within the Gascoyne and Kimberley region (Gascoyne Development Commission, hereafter known as GDC, 2003; Kimberley Development Commission hereafter known as KDC, 2003; Pilbara Development Commission hereafter known as PDC, 2003). The Western Australian Government (2005), using ABS (2005a) population projections, estimated that these three regions will have a combined population of almost 150 000 individuals by 2031. However, due to the introduction of fly-in/fly-out mining practices during the early 1990s, the population of the Pilbara region is currently in decline (PDC, 2003; ABS, 2006d). The Gascoyne's and Kimberley's population are both currently showing slow growth. Furthermore, an increasing characteristic of the Kimberley population is the high proportion of temporary residency during the months of June through to August/September. The majority of this increase in temporary population is due to the large influx of seasonal workers and tourists to the region (KDC, 2006).

The Western Australian section of the study area has a diverse economy. Industries such as mining, oil and natural gas exploration, horticulture and pastoralism, commercial fishing, retail, construction and tourism are the foundation of this region's economy. In 2004/05 the Gross Regional Product of these three regions was approximately \$30 billion: Gascoyne, \$583 million; Pilbara, \$24.8 billion; and Kimberley, \$14.4 billion (GDC, 2006; KDC, 2006; PDC, 2006). The major contributor to the economies of northern Western Australia is mining and oil and natural gas exploration (\$15.7 billion), most of which occurs in the Pilbara region



*Figure 3.2. Map of Western Australia showing survey locations.*  
(Creator: Cridland, 2007)

(\\$20.6 billion) (PDC, 2003). The economy and population of northern Western Australia is predicted to grow in the near future. Evidence of this growth can be seen in the \\$270 million a year construction industry where numerous new residual subdivisions and major capital work projects are being developed throughout the region (GDC, 2003; KDC, 2003; PDC, 2003).

### **3:2:2. Queensland**

The size of the study area in Queensland covers approximately 1 249 400km<sup>2</sup>, incorporating the Statistical Divisions of Fitzroy, Mackay (including the Whitsundays), Outback (combined Central West and North West Statistical Divisions), Far North Queensland and Northern Queensland (see Figure 3.3). The landscape varies from tropical coastal and highland rainforests in the Far North, Mackay and parts of the Northern Statistical Divisions, to tropical savannah land across inland areas of the Far North, parts of Central West and most of Northern and North West Queensland Divisions. The south-west portion of the Central West Statistical Division also encroaches on the northern section of the Simpson Desert (Office of Economic and Statistical Research hereafter known as OESR, 2005).

The regions incorporated in the study area of Queensland had an estimated population of 819 000 in 2004 (ABS, 2006f; 2006g; 2006h; 2006i; 2006j; 2006k). The majority of northern Queensland's population in 2004 was located in large coastal urban centres such as Rockhampton (62 236), Mackay (66 158), Townsville/Thuringowa (133 762) and Cairns (106 904). The population of large inland service towns and cities like Longreach (3 335), Charters Towers (8 847) and Mt Isa (20 554) are considerably smaller (OESR, 2007). Furthermore, the inland Statistical Divisions of this study area are currently facing a decline in their population. From 1998 to 2003, the population of Central West Queensland and North West Queensland declined by 0.2 per cent and 0.1 per cent, respectively. In contrast, the Statistical Divisions situated on the coast have all showed varying levels of population growth over the same period: Fitzroy, 0.6 per cent; Mackay, 0.9 per cent; Northern, 1.7 per cent; and Far North, 1.2 per cent (OESR, 2005). Figures from

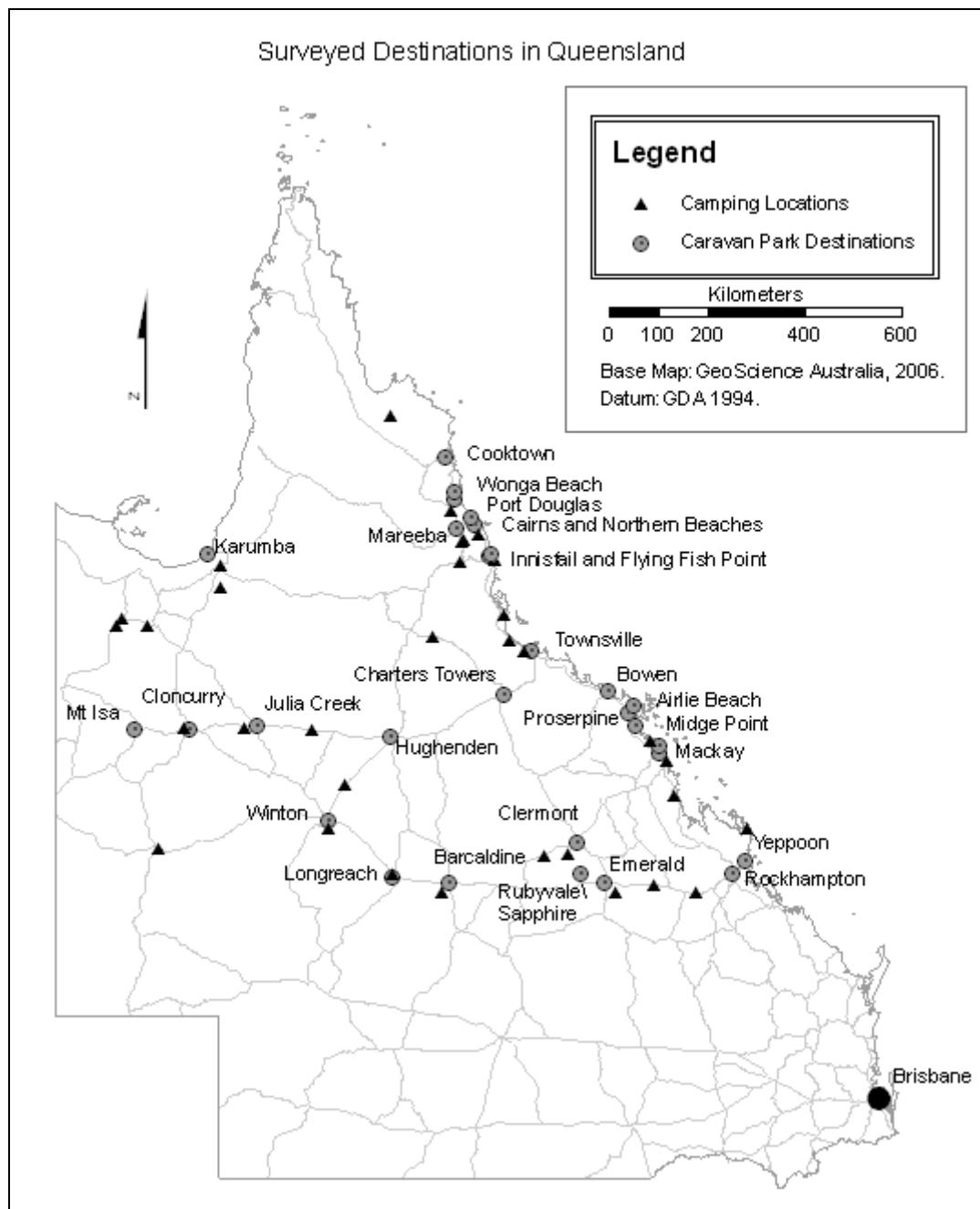


Figure 3.3. Map of Queensland showing survey locations.  
(Creator: Cridland, 2007)

Queensland's Department for Infrastructure and Planning (2008) estimated that the medium growth projection for the region incorporated in this study will be over 1.1 million by 2026.

Tropical North Queensland has a rich and diverse economy. The main commodities leaving airports and harbours in tropical North Queensland stem from the primary sector (i.e. mining: coal, ferrous and non-ferrous metals; aquatic products; and agricultural products: live stock, cereal crops, fruit and vegetables and sugar). In excess of \$19 billion worth of commodities were exported from airports and harbours across Queensland in 2003-04, with approximately \$12.3 billion having left from Tropical North Queensland, which accounts for two-thirds of the state's exports. The Statistical Divisions of Mackay and Fitzroy had the highest dollar value of exports: approximately \$5.3 billion and \$3.6 billion respectively (OESR, 2005). Mining is Tropical North Queensland's largest single export industry: approximately \$7.1 billion in 2003-04, most of which is associated with coal, coke and coal briquette production which comes from inland Queensland locations such as Clermont. The mining of coal and coal products is worth \$4.5 billion and \$1.3 billion to the Mackay and Fitzroy Statistical Divisions, respectively. Mining of other non-ferrous materials (e.g. bauxite) from the study area in 2003-04 was valued at \$1.7 billion. Ferrous ore and scrap metal also contributed \$1.3 billion. Agriculture on the coastal fringes is primarily sugar cane and sugar by-products (valued \$43.7 million) and fruit and vegetable production (\$7.7 million). Pastoralism and agriculture are major industries across the northern proportion of inland Queensland. Grazing, meat and livestock exports for northern Queensland are estimated to be worth approximately \$193 million a year. In addition, cropping for both human and animal consumption, is valued at \$36 million. During 2003-04, fisheries across northern Queensland also provided in excess of \$68.7 million towards Queensland's economy (OESR, 2005).

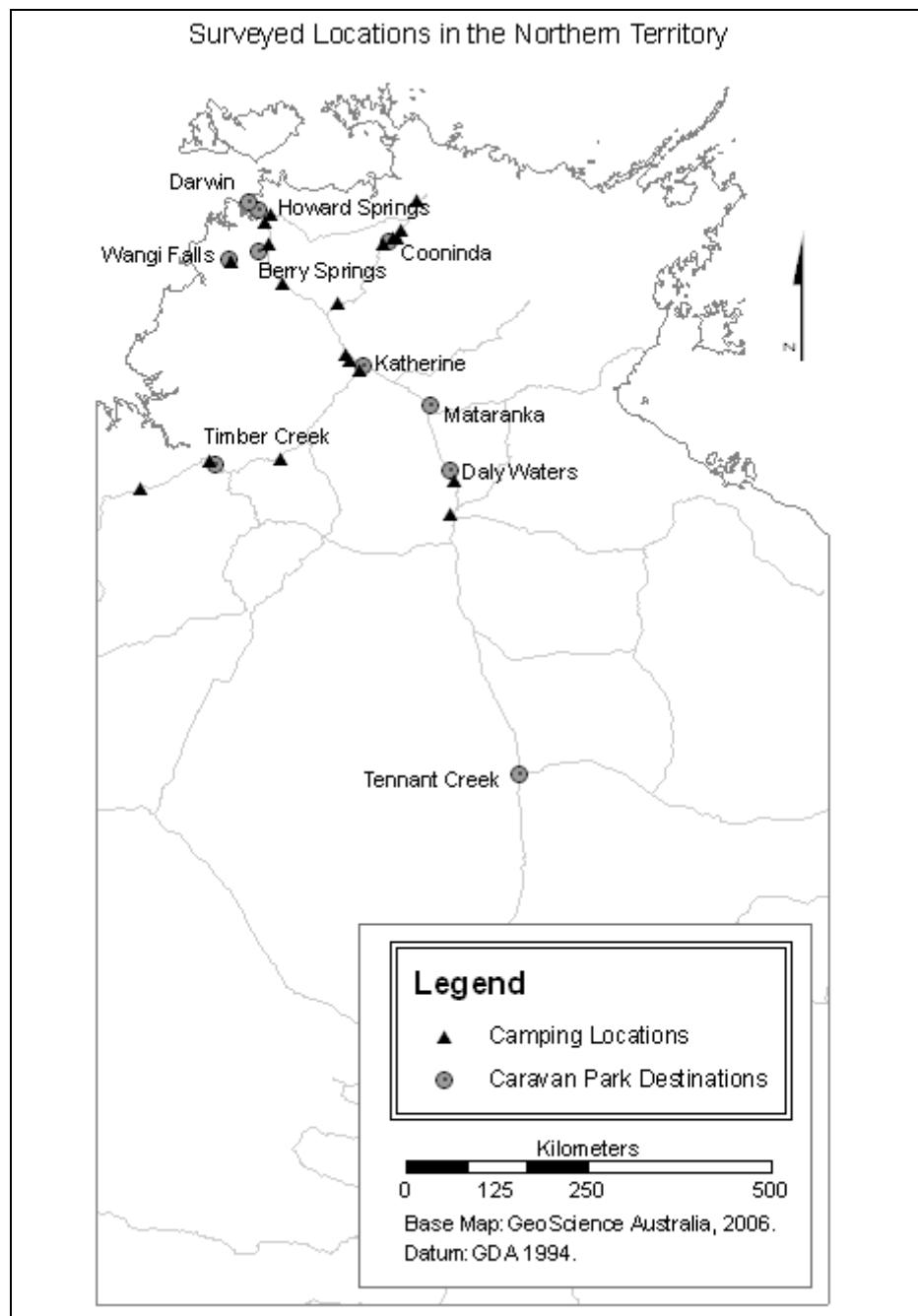
### **3:2:3. Northern Territory**

The section of the Northern Territory incorporated into this study covers an area of approximately 1 180 000 km<sup>2</sup> (ABS, 2005b). Included in the study area are

the Northern Territory's Administrated Regions of Central, Barkly, Katherine, Darwin Region Balance (or outer Darwin area) and Darwin SD and Environs. Areas excluded from this study are the Administration Region of East Arnhem and areas south of the Tropic of Capricorn in the Central region. East Arnhem was excluded because both grey nomads and the principal investigator have difficulties in accessing land owned by Aboriginal people. Figure 3.4 shows the locations survey in this study.

The resident population of the Northern Territory in 2005 was approximately 202 000 (ABS, 2005b). ABS (2006l, 2006m; 2006n; 2006o; 2006p; 2006q) estimated the permanent population within the study area of the Northern Territory to be approximately 154 000 people. The majority of the population in the Northern Territory is located within the Darwin SD and Environs region (113 183 individuals), which includes the Statistical sub-division of Darwin City and Palmerston-East Arm, Litchfield and Finness. Outside these regions, the population is generally sparsely distributed, with the exception of the City of Alice Springs. Situated in the Central Administration Region, Alice Springs had a population of approximately 26 500 persons in 2005 (ABS, 2006a) compared to the entire Central Region which had a population of 39 068 people. In 2005, the Administration Region incorporated in the outer Darwin area had a population of 10 157, while Katherine's and Barkly's population was 17 690 and 5 901, respectively. Over the last five years, the Administration Regions of Katherine and Barkly have shown a decline in population of -0.3 per cent and -1.3 per cent, respectively. All other regions have shown population growth, particularly Darwin SD and Environs, with a 1.2 per cent mean annual growth between 1999 and 2004 (ABS, 2006a). With a projected growth rate of approximately one per cent a year, the ABS (1998) estimates that the Northern Territory population could exceed 281 000 individuals by 2031.

The estimated Gross State Product (hereafter GSP) for the Northern Territory for the period 2005-06 was approximately \$10.5 billion. From 1995, the Northern Territory's economy has grown at a rate of over three per cent annually (Northern Territory Treasury, 2006). The main economic activities in the Northern Territory are mining, tourism, alumina production and funding from defence and government services. Mining, on the back of oil and natural gas exploration in the Timor Sea,



*Figure 3.4. Map of Northern Territory showing surveyed locations.*  
(Creator: Cridland, 2007)

contributes 18.8 per cent of the Northern Territory's GSP (approximately \$2 billion) (ABS, 2006a). Other mining activities taking place in the Northern Territory include uranium, diamonds and gold. Construction and government activities, including defence, contributed 7.2 per cent and 7.6 per cent respectively towards the Northern Territory's economy. Agriculture is not extensive in the Northern Territory, providing less than four per cent to the Northern Territory's GSP. However, the export of cattle continues to gain importance. Live cattle exports have shown an increase of thirteen per cent in 2001-02. Cattle exports are valued at an estimated \$175 million, with 275 000 head of cattle leaving annually from ports across the Northern Territory. The Indonesian livestock market accounts for approximately fifty per cent of cattle exported from the Northern Territory. The location of the Northern Territory, situated in close proximity to Asian markets, will see this region of Australia grow in importance both economically and in population, especially in areas surrounding Darwin.

### **3:3. Tourism to the Study Area**

Tourism is an important industry for many tropical regions of Australia. Individuals visiting destinations across northern Australia inject approximately \$16 billion into these communities each year (GDC, 2006; KDC, 2006; PDC, 2006; Tourism Queensland, 2004; Northern Territory Treasury, 2006), although the distribution of tourism wealth is not equal across northern regions. Table 1 highlights the economic value of tourism and tourist numbers to the study area. This section will discuss the value of tourism relative to the study area for each state.

#### **3:3:1. Tourism Industry in Western Australia**

Tourism within the study area in Western Australia also contributes substantially towards this region's economy. In 2004-05, almost one million individuals visited the Gascoyne, Pilbara and Kimberley regions. They provided approximately \$629 million to the region's economy (GDC, 2006; KDC, 2006; PDC,

*Table 3.1. Visitor numbers and tourism expenditure to the study area: by states and territory.*

Study Area	Visitor Numbers (Approx)	Growth in Domestic Tourist Numbers (%)	Tourism Economic Value (\$)
Tropical Western Australia	1 000 000	Increase by 9% in 2005/2006 from 2004/2005	629 Million (2006)
Tropical Queensland	5 500 000	Increase 14% in 2003/2004 from 2002/2003	12.7 Billion (2004)
Tropical Northern Territory	1 650 000	Increase by 5% in 2005/2006 from 2004/2005	1.2 Billion (2006)

(Source: GDC, 2006; KDC, 2006; PDC, 2006; Tourism Queensland, 2004; Northern Territory Treasury, 2006)

2006). The dollar value of tourism to the Kimberley region is valued at \$227.3 million, which is just behind the dollar value generated by the mining/petroleum and retail industries (KDC, 2006). Tourism to the Gascoyne is the highest grossing industry for the region, providing \$172 million to its economy (GDC, 2006). Although tourism is not a key industry for the Pilbara, being over shadowed by mining and petroleum based industries, it still brought in \$225.9 million to the region in 2004-05 (PDC, 2006). Furthermore, tourism, via construction and spending, also helps to drive other industries, particularly the retail sector. The retail sector alone provided over \$640 million for the three Statistical Divisions in 2002, some of which can be attributed directly to tourism. This highlights the growing importance tourism provides to regional Australia (GDC, 2003; KDC, 2003; PDC, 2003).

### **3:3:2. Tourism Industry in Queensland**

A total of 5.5 million domestic tourists visited the area of Queensland incorporated in this study in the year ending June 2007. This number represents over 25 per cent of the visitors who made a trip to Queensland during the same time

(Tourism Queensland, 2007a). Expenditure of domestic tourists visiting Queensland in 2004 was almost \$10 billion, with international tourists spending a further \$2.7 billion. Excluding airfares and long distance travel costs, in excess of \$1.8 billion was spent by Australians travelling within the Queensland study area during the same period (Tourism Queensland, 2005). Most regions within the Queensland study area showed a growth in domestic tourist spending. The ‘Outback’ had a 40.6 per cent increase in tourist spending between September 2003 and September 2004, followed by ‘Mackay’ and ‘Northern Queensland’ with a 25.3 per cent and 18.6 percent increase, respectively. This growth was greater than the increase in the Statistical Divisions located in southern Queensland. The strength of these increases indicates the growing importance tourism is having to northern Queensland. For the year ending June 2004 period, the only Tourist Statistical Division that had a decline in domestic spending was the Whitsunday (i.e. -10.7 per cent), by in large due to a decrease in the number of international visitors (Tourism Queensland, 2004). Due to sample variation, the rate of growth or decline in expenditure for many regions in Queensland for the years ending 2006 is unavailable (Tourism Queensland, 2007a). However, data is available for Tropical North Queensland. Daily expenditure in Tropical North Queensland for the financial period 2006/2007 is up two per cent from the same period in 2005/2006, but overall trip expenditure was down eleven per cent due to a decline in the average length of stay (Tourism Queensland, 2007b).

### **3:3:3. Tourism Industry in Northern Territory**

From 2001 until the end of 2003 the Northern Territory suffered a decline in tourist numbers. However, in 2004 there was an eight per cent increase, with 1.65 million people visiting the Northern Territory. Tourist numbers for the period 2005-06 also showed a further five per cent increase, with 1.74 million tourists holidaying in the Northern Territory. Tourist expenditure in the Northern Territory during 2005 reached almost \$1.2 billion (Northern Territory Treasury, 2006). Half the visitors to the Northern Territory visited the ‘Top End’ region (50 per cent). The ‘Top End’ region includes Darwin and surrounding areas. The ‘Central’ region also received 39 per cent of the visitors to the Territory, and the Katherine and Barkly regions had a

further fourteen per cent and nine per cent, respectively (ABS, 2005b). The number of domestic interstate tourists to the Northern Territory in 2005 was 788 000, almost double that of the 450 000 international visitors. Self drive visitors to the Northern Territory declined by thirteen per cent in 2003-04. Most of the decline in self drive visitors was due to a 40 per cent drop in the international sector, whereas interstate self drive visitors only decreased by three per cent. However, self drive visitors from New South Wales, Victoria and Australian Capital Territory showed a twelve per cent increase in visitor numbers for the 2003/04 period (ABS, 2005b).

### **3:4. The Climate of Northern Australia**

Climatically, northern Australia has a definite seasonality. Climatic conditions in northern Australia are influenced by the north-south movement of the monsoonal trough associated with the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zones (ITCZ) within the Earth's equatorial belt (Bureau of Meteorology, hereafter known as BOM, 1997:5-7). The movement of the monsoonal trough produces two definite seasons across northern Australia: a wet season (i.e. monsoon season); and a dry season. The wet season occurs between October/November to March/April and is normally a time of high rainfall and humidity. This time of the year is also associated with extreme climatic events such as tropical cyclones. These extreme cyclones generally provide the bulk of the rainfall across the region and are associated with damaging high winds. Furthermore, temperatures during the wet season in arid areas consistently reach in excess of 40°C, making visitation unpleasant for many tourists. Climatically, the conditions during the wet season across all of northern Australia are not conducive to prolonged visitation by holiday makers and these months are considered the off-peak season. The months of April through to the end of October are referred to as the dry season, where day time temperatures throughout most of northern Australia are in the mid-to-high 20s°C and low 30s°C and humidity can be lower than 40 per cent in some parts (BOM, 2002). The climate during the dry season in most regions of northern Australia is usually pleasant and warm day time temperatures, with minimal rainfall. Rarely do severe climatic events like cyclones occur during the dry season.

For these reasons the dry season is considered the peak time for visitation to northern Australia.

The influence of the monsoon over northern Australia is not uniform. Northern Australia has a diverse environment ranging from tropical rainforest on the eastern seaboard, to tropical savannah grass and bushland across the top, to arid deserts located in the interior of Australia (see Figure 3.5). The pleasant climate across northern Australia during the peak season is a major factor that attracts vast numbers of senior Australians annually. Furthermore, the diverse landscape adds variety to the trip for many grey nomads, which further promotes the motivation to travel (Oryx and Leonard, 2005). Figure 3.6 shows the typical summer and winter weather patterns across continental Australia representing the sea level isobars, wind directions, and fronts. Further details on the climates throughout the study area will be provided in the following sub-section.

### **3:4:1. The Wet Tropics of the Study Area**

The weather of the north eastern seaboard of Australia is influenced by the warm tropical maritime air mass from the Pacific Ocean and Coral Sea. In areas where the Great Dividing Range is situated perpendicular to (or near to) the maritime air mass, rainfall is high. Even though rainfall occurs primarily during the wet season, the Mackay region and the Wet Tropics of Far North Queensland do receive rainfall during the dry season (see Figure 3.7 a and b). In this environment where the annual rainfall is high, tropical rainforest flourishes. Maximum day time temperatures in this region have averages in the low 30s°C with temperatures falling to the high to mid 20s°C at night during the wet season. Rainfall can average 350 to 450 mm a month at this time of the year. This high rainfall and warm temperatures consistently produce between 70 and 80 per cent humidity. However, during the dry season, temperatures in the northern Wet Tropics near Cairns and the Daintree are considerably warmer compared to areas in the southern parts of the tropics around Mackay. There is a 5°C difference in maximum day time temperatures during the dry season between coastal regions in the north and the south. Maximum temperatures in

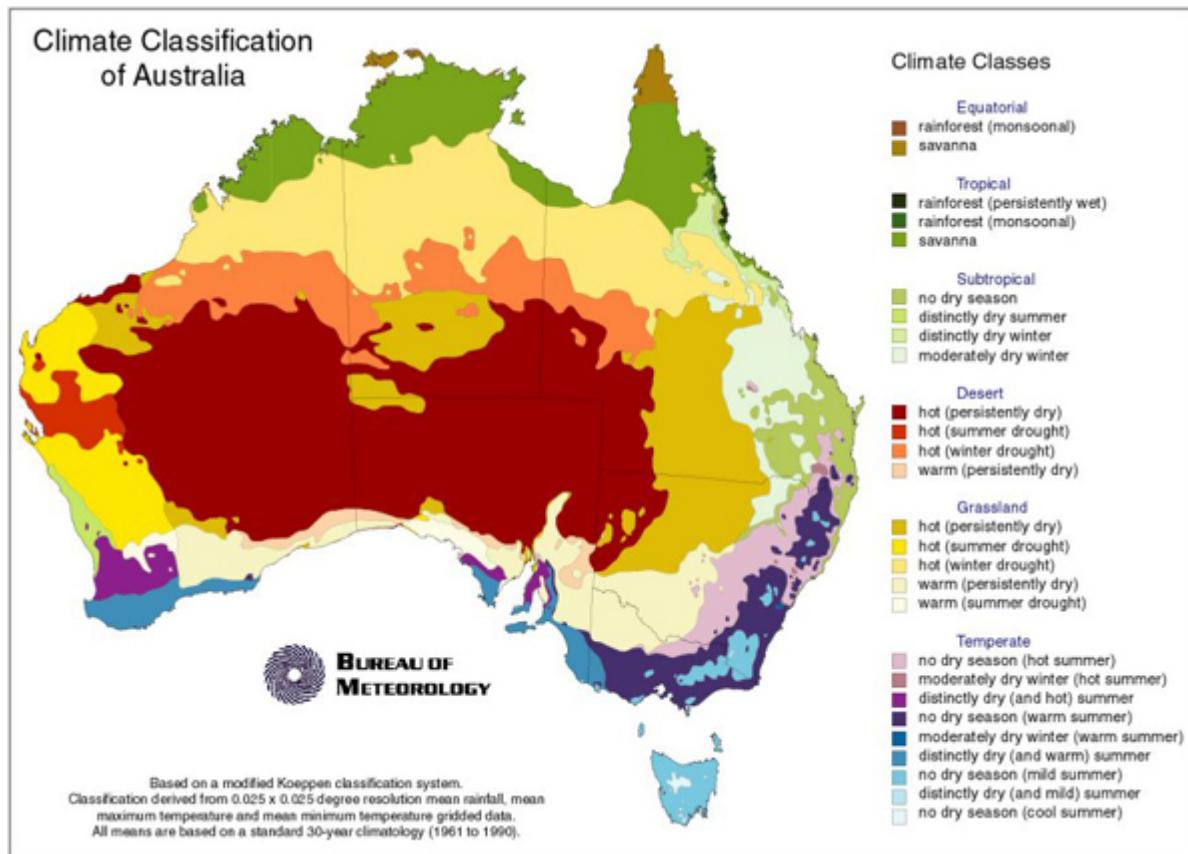


Figure 3.5. Map highlighting the different climate zones of Australia.  
(Source: BOM, 2002)

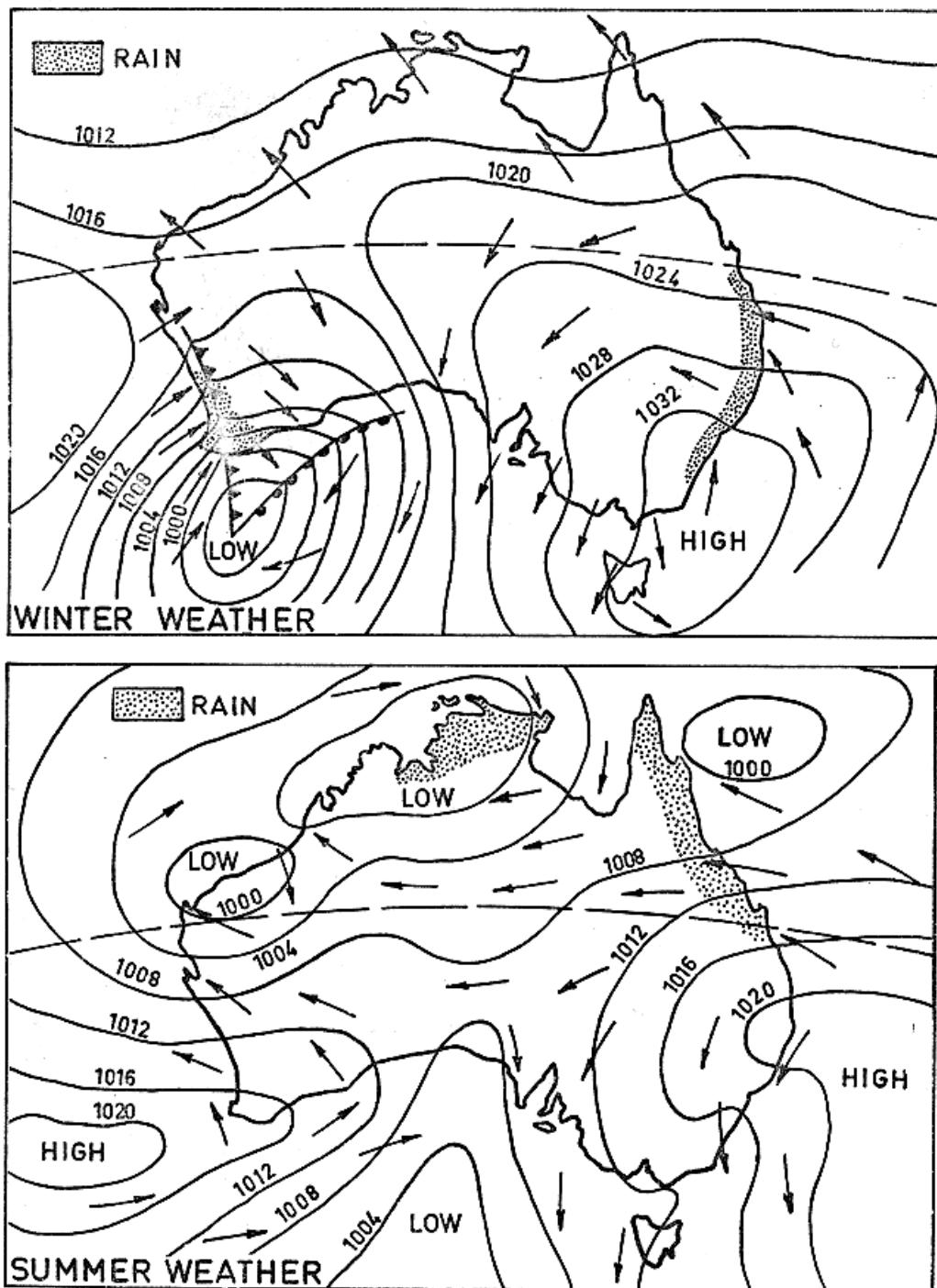
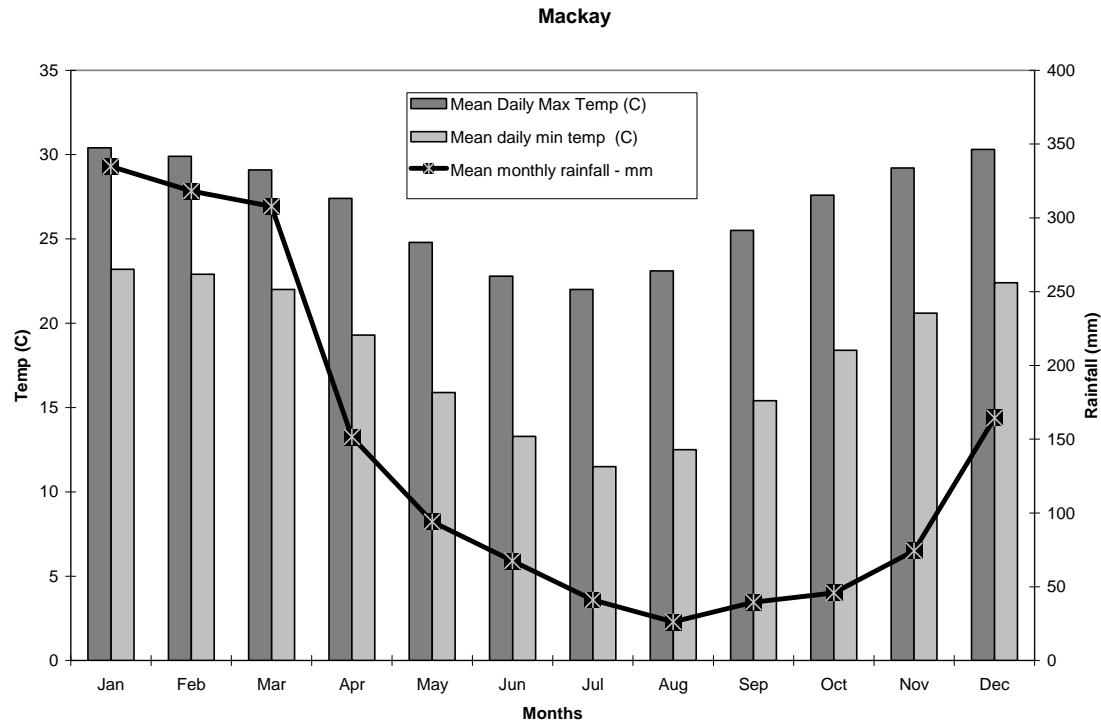
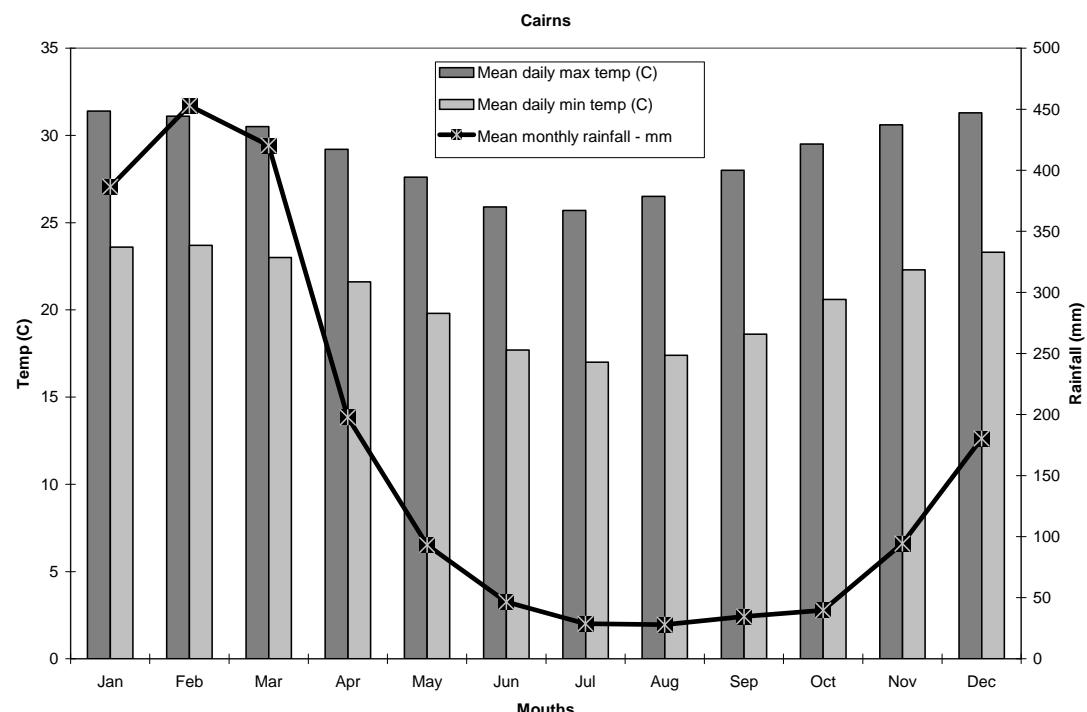


Figure 3.6 Map showing seasonal wind and rainfall patterns across Australia.  
(Source: Linacre and Geerts, 2005)



(a)



(b)

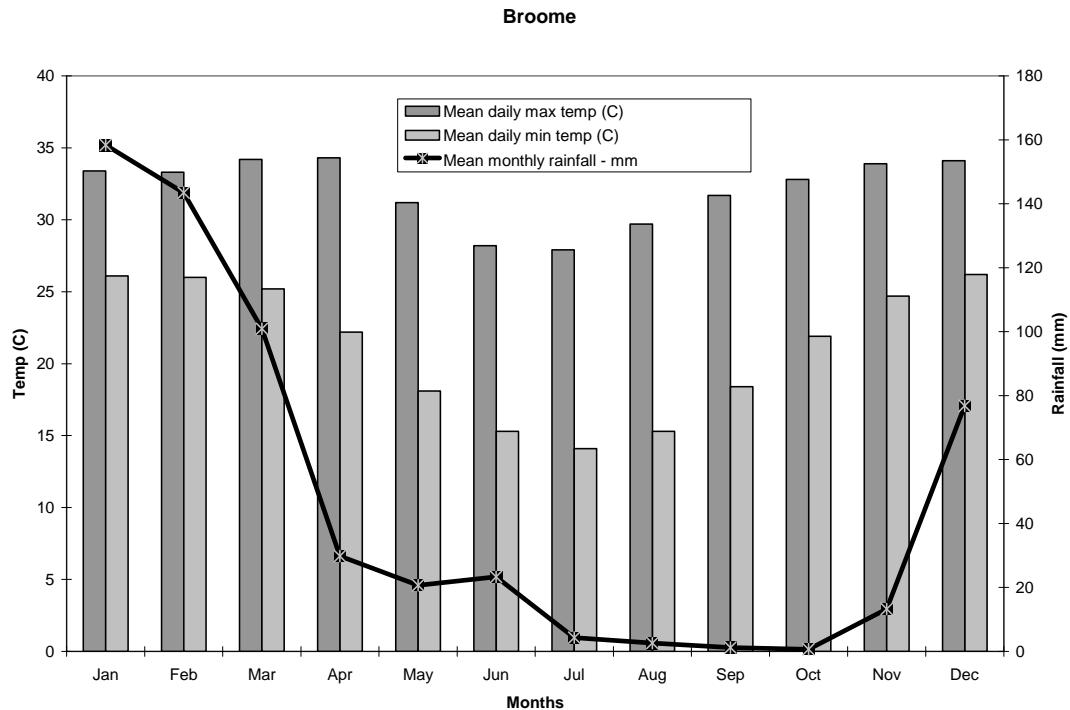
*Figure 3.7 (a and b). The climate of Mackay and Cairns which are located adjacent to rainforest on the north east coastal fringes of tropical Australia.  
(Source: BOM, 2002)*

the northern parts of North Queensland are consistently around 27°C, and rarely drop below 22°C at night. In comparison, southern regions of the study area have day time averages around 22°C, with night time temperatures often reaching 11°C or lower (BOM, 2002). Hence, many grey nomads travel further north, rather than staying at destinations in the south, which are considered to be colder than northern destinations.

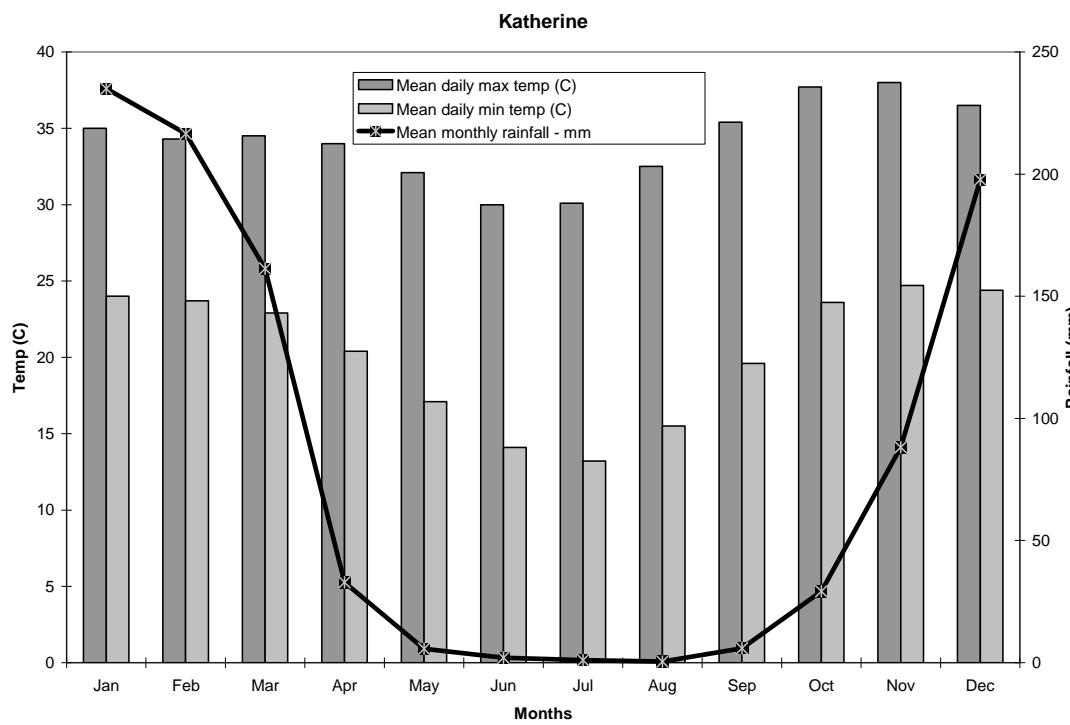
### **3:4:2. The Savannah Region of the Study Area**

The tropical savannah of northern Australia stretches from the areas on the eastern seaboard around the Fitzroy, Northern Queensland and Far North Queensland Statistical Divisions (in areas adjacent to Rockhampton, Townsville and Cape York Peninsular), to the north western coast of Western Australia surrounding Broome. Included in this area is the Gulf Country (i.e. Gulf of Carpentaria), the northern parts of the Northern Territory incorporating the Top End, Arnhem Land, down to the Katherine region and across to the Western Australian border near Kununurra. In Western Australia the savannah lands cover almost the entire Kimberley region (Gillison, 1983). Vegetation across the Savannah lands varies from vast tracks of savannah grass plains (primarily Spear grass, Mitchell grass) to eucalypts and acacia bushland (Walker and Gillison, 1982).

The savannahs are classed as semi-arid land. Rainfall across the savannahs is strongly influenced by the monsoonal movements with rainfall primarily occurring during the wet season (see Figure 3.8 a to d). Rainfall during the dry season is minimal. Throughout the wet season, maximum and minimum daily temperatures are consistently around 35°C and 24°C, respectively, with monthly humidity averages reaching in excess of 80 per cent. Monthly rainfall averages for wet season can vary depending on location. Savannah destinations like Townsville and Darwin which are situated on the coast have monthly averages of 300 mm and 450 mm, respectively. In contrast, inland locations and areas in the lower coastal section of the Kimberley receive considerably less rainfall (i.e. 150 mm to 200 mm at some locations). High rainfall on the Western Australian coast around Broome coincides with tropical cyclones. Broome has a monthly average of 160 mm during the wet season. Rainfall across inland areas of the Savannahs (e.g. Katherine, Charters Towers) generally

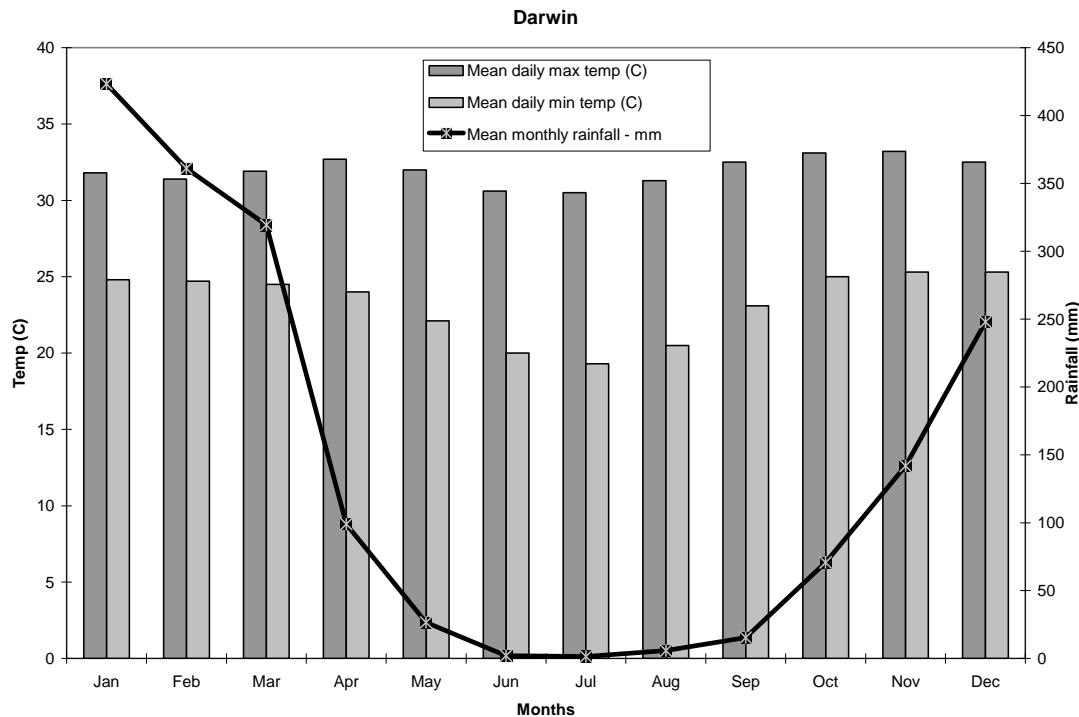


(a)

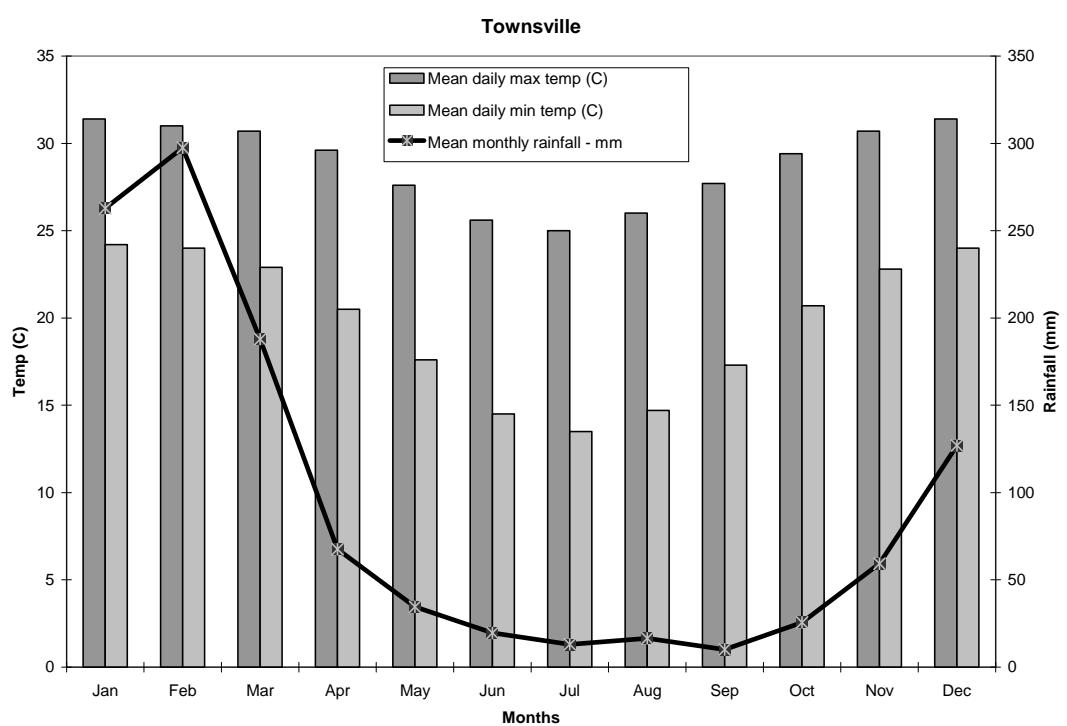


(b)

*Figure 3.8 (a to b). Climate patterns of northern Australia's savannah lands at a variety of destinations: Broome(a) and Katherine(b).*  
(Source: BOM, 2002)



(c)



(d)

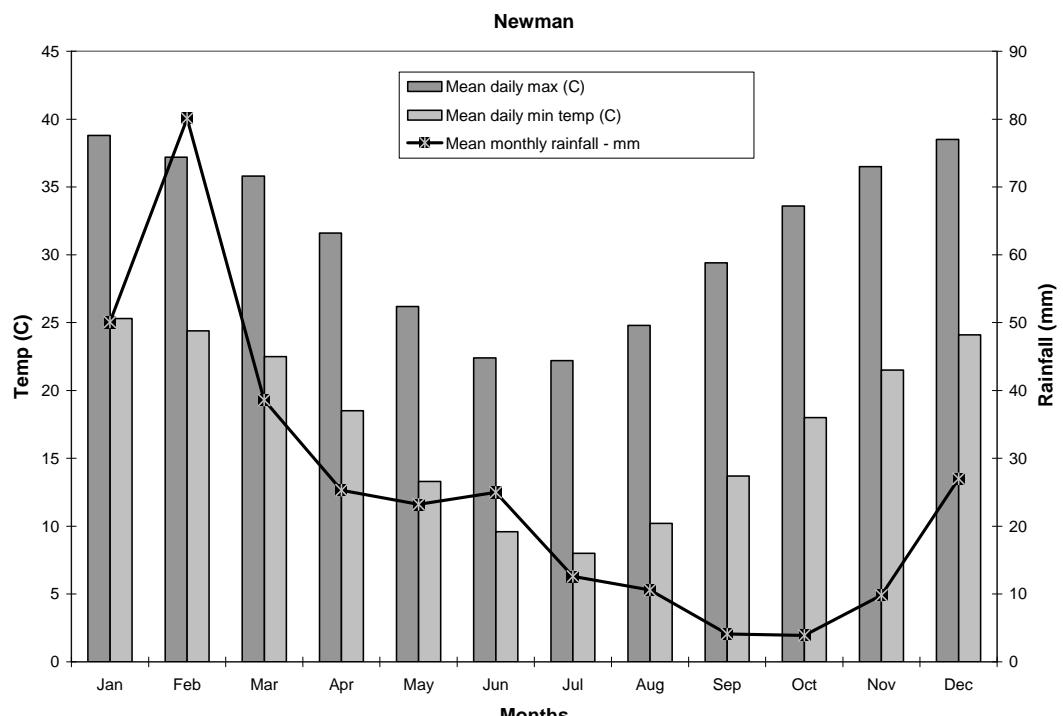
*Figure 3.8 (c to d). Climate patterns of northern Australia's savannah lands at a variety of destinations: Darwin(c) and Townsville(d).*  
(Source: BOM, 2002)

ranges from 200 mm to 220 mm. Dry season rainfall is generally less than 5 mm a month. Temperatures throughout the dry season are pleasant, between 25°C and 30°C, with a monthly humidity average of between 50 and 60 per cent (BOM, 2002). Pleasant temperatures and a dry climate is an attractive draw card for tourists, particularly grey nomads.

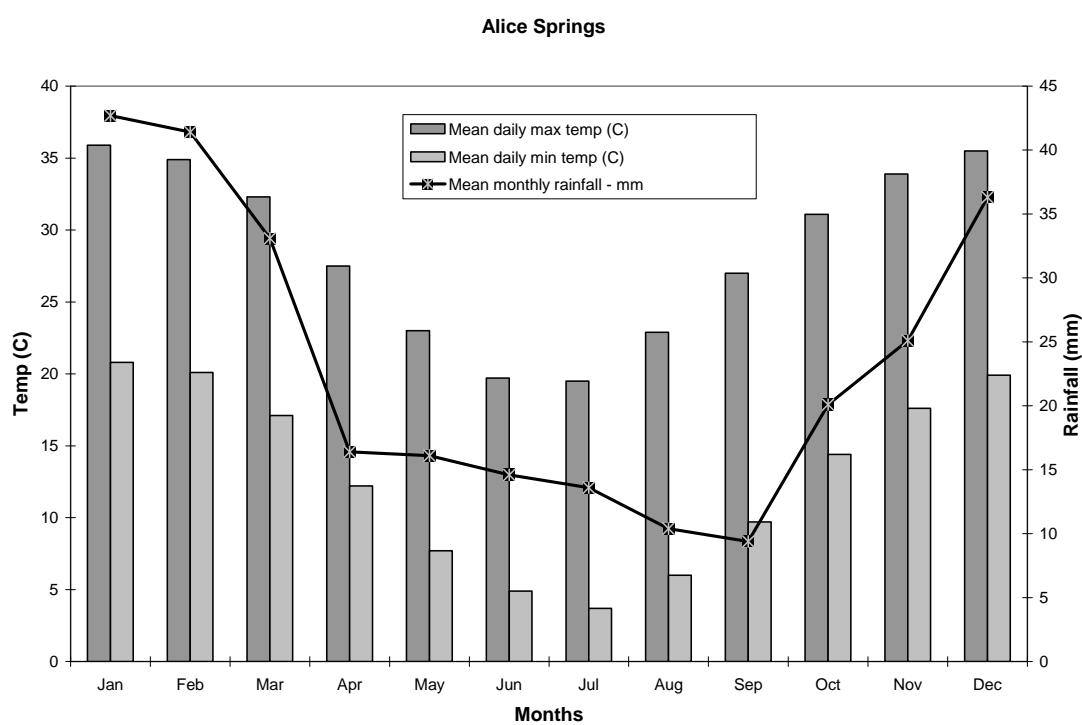
### **3:4:3. The Arid Regions of the Study Area**

The arid regions of tropical Australia span the areas of southwest Queensland, across the central and southern regions of the Northern Territory, through the interior of Western Australia to coastal areas of the Pilbara region. Vegetation in arid regions consists primarily of large areas of hummock grasslands, spinifex, acacias, grevilleas, mulga forests and a variety of succulent shrubs and sedge lands (Graham, 2001). The arid regions incorporated in this study include the eastern and northern sections of the Tanami desert, the north-western corner of the Great Sandy Desert, the northern sections of the Simpson Desert and the Little Sandy Desert. The landscapes of these deserts cover large tracks of sand dune country, especially in the northwest and central parts of the study area. In other areas of Central Australia and southern sections of the study area, the landscape consists of open rocky and clay-pan plains. Furthermore, southern and northwest sections of the study area are dominated by mountain ranges such as the McDonnell, Chichester and Hamersley Ranges (Learmonth and Learmonth, 1972).

The climate of the arid regions surveyed in this study is typical of most arid regions in mid to low latitudes around the world. Summer/wet season temperatures have a monthly average in excess of 35°C, with minimums in the low 20s°C (see Figure 3.9). The arid regions receive most of their rainfall during this time of the year, if they receive any at all. Like most tropical locations, rainfall is associated with the monsoons and correlates with the movement inland of tropical cyclones, weakening into rain depressions. Locations in Central Australia generally receive 45 mm a month during the wet season, which is considerably less than other arid areas situated near the northern coast. The northern sections of arid tropical Australia and areas nearer to the coast (i.e. Northern Tanami and Pilbara regions) receive approximately 80 mm of rainfall monthly as the monsoonal influences are greater in



(a)



(b)

*Figure 3.9 (a and b). The climate of townships located in arid regions of northern Australia.*

(Source: BOM, 2002)

these locations. Humidity during the wet season ranges from between 20 to 40 per cent. The months of May to July are the highest time for humidity in arid regions, with humidity reaching around the 50 per cent mark. This increase in humidity is due to a decrease of winds through the autumn and early winter months, combining with the moisture residue in the soil from the wet season. Mean monthly rainfall during these months is minimal. At the height of the dry season, average monthly rainfall can be as low as three to five millimetres and as high as twelve millimetres. Temperatures at this time have an average maximum in the low 20s°C, with temperatures dropping to five to nine degrees Celsius at night (BOM, 2002).

### **3:5. A Brief History of the Australian Road Network**

Australia's economic and population growth since European colonisation has been a driving mechanism for the development and expansion of a national highway network. The development of a sealed nationwide highway/road system was vital in establishing, and is the life blood of, many regional and remote communities. Distances that once took weeks to transverse 50 years ago, can now be driven in a few days. Today, this highway system provides communities with a means to deliver their produce to distant markets. In addition, an integrated road network also provides a conduit for greater interaction between communities, access to health care and in turn increased visitation by tourists. Moreover, a sealed nationwide highway/road network is one of the major factors that have created an environment conducive to grey nomad mobility. This section will discuss a brief history of the development of an integrated national highway/road system in Australia.

At the time of Federation, local governments had the responsibility for road construction and maintenance. The road network during this period was not extensive, with most travellers preferring to use coastal shipping and the rail network for long distant commuting. Local government funding for roads was supplied by their prospective state governments. During the 1920s, state governments soon realised that many local councils could not afford to build or maintain the main roads linking the major urban centres to the state capitals. Therefore, state governments were forced to establish state road authorities to insure connectivity between population

nodes. By the end of 1926, all states had legislated for the provision of a main road authority (Queensland Department of Main Roads (hereafter DMR), 2004; Department of Transport and Regional Services (hereafter DTRS), 2006). Some of the major roads that were constructed in the pre-Second World War era included the Hume Highway in 1914, Nepean Highway in 1915, the road from Cairns to Croydon in the 1920s (DTRS, 2006), the Pacific Highway, the Bruce Highway, the Condamine Highway, and the Gillies Highway, all in the 1930s (DMR, 2004). These highways were fundamental in connecting major population nodes with outlying communities, making the transportation of goods and people between nodes easier, cheaper and less time consuming.

The Commonwealth Government finally became actively involved in major road construction during the 1920s with the passing of the *Public Works Act* of 1922. Under the Act, each state was provided with up to \$500 000, on a dollar for dollar basis, for road construction, helping to alleviate unemployment in regional areas. This money was to be spent on the development of roads outside city areas, on the approval of the Federal Government. In the following year, the Federal Government passed the *Main Roads Development Act* of 1923, providing a \$1 million grant for road construction. Further Commonwealth funds were provided under the *Federal Aid Roads Act* of 1926, as the Commonwealth sought to promote a national approach to road construction. The impact of the Depression led to a decline in road funding, and a slowing in road construction. However, considerable advances in road construction techniques like the use of bituminous surfacing and mechanised machinery in road construction occurred during the 1920s and 1930s (DTRS, 2006). The *Federal Aid Roads Act* of 1926 was replaced in 1937 with the *Federal Aid Roads and Works Act* of 1937, which determined the level of funding the Commonwealth Government provided to the states for road construction over a 10 year period (ABS, 1974; DTRS, 2006).

With the onset of the Second World War, the importance of constructing a national highway system became a high priority for the defence of Australia. Under fear of Japanese invasion in 1941, troop numbers throughout northern Australia needed to be reinforced and supplied. Road transport provided a safe and reliable means of getting troops and supplies to strategic locations quickly. Hence, the

development of a national highway network connecting northern Australia to southern destinations became fundamental for the war effort (DMR, 2004; DTRS, 2006). The Stuart and Barkly Highways were urgently upgraded, with the Federal Government decreeing that the section of the Stuart Highway between Tennant Creek and Birdum be built as an all weather road to guarantee supplies and troops for the re-enforcement of Darwin. In addition, roads and bridges across the entire country were strengthened to support heavy military traffic. To aid in the defence of Western Australia, a road across the Nullarbor Plains was built in 1941, connecting it to South Australia. For the first time, road traffic could move more freely from south eastern Australia to destinations in Western Australia and the northern regions of the Northern Territory (DMR, 2004; DTRS, 2006). Figure 3.10 shows the highway network in 1943.

After the Second World War, the momentum of road construction continued. More money was devoted to road construction, ensuring the growth of a national road network. During the 1950s and 1960s, both state and local governments across Australia, with the aid of funding from the Federal Government, vigorously undertook road construction and upgrading. The sealing of major highways commenced and bridge construction reached a new high. The Hume, Princess, Barrier, Mitchell, Great Eastern, Newell, Bruce and Oxley Highways were all sealed (DMR, 2004; DTRS, 2006). In addition, with the expansion of mining in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, major upgrading of the North West Coastal Highway commenced (DTRS, 2006).

In 1974, with the expansion of Australia's road network and the passing of the *National Roads Act* of 1974, the *Roads Grant Act* of 1974, and the *Transport Planning and Research Act* of 1974, the Federal Government took full responsibility for funding a national road system. Hence, the Commonwealth Government formulated a national highway system connecting all mainland states and territories and capital cities. By 1988, all capital cities, major towns and cities throughout mainland Australia were connected by a network of sealed highways. In 1990, this network of national highways stretched over 18 500 km (DTRS, 2006). Figure 3.11 shows the extent of Australia's major highway networks and the destinations surveyed in this study. The sealing of a national highway system permitted safer, faster and more economical travel. The sealing of major highways connecting main

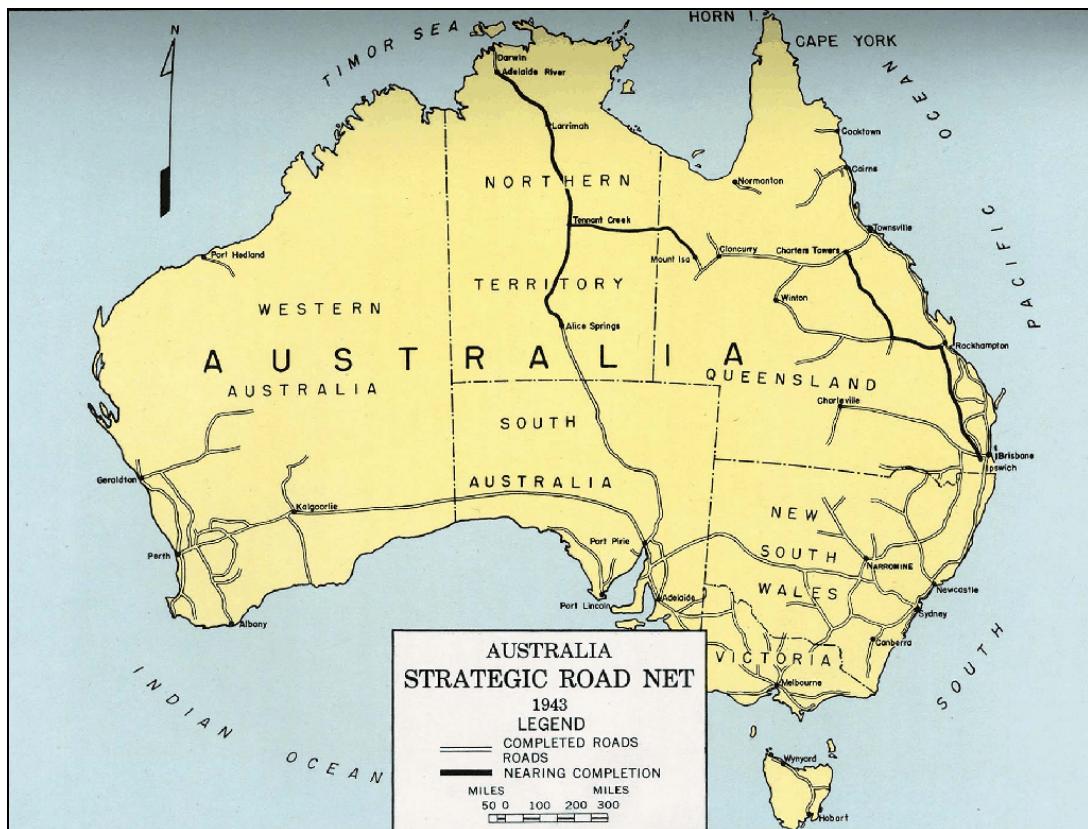
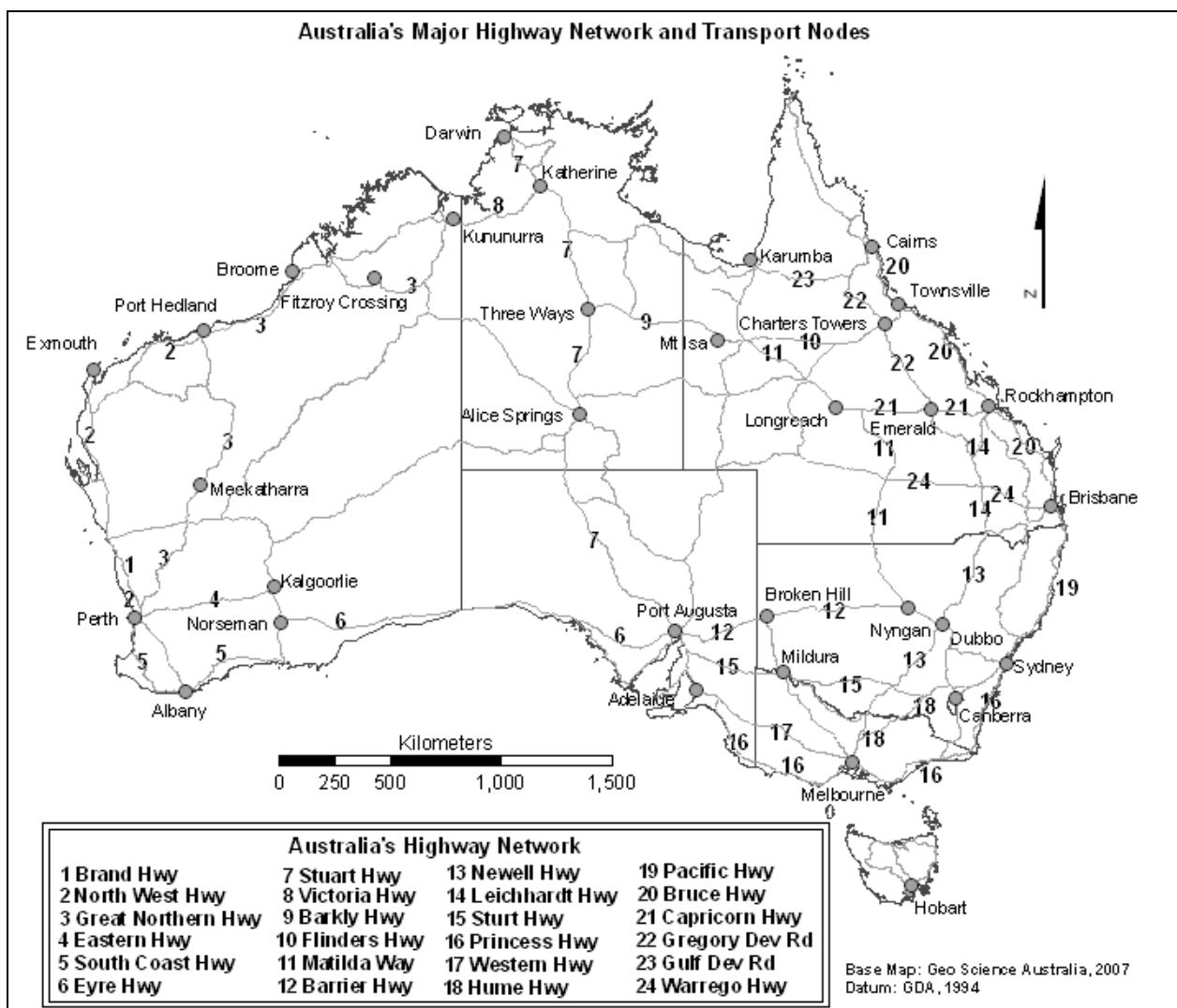


Figure 3.10. Map showing Australia's highway network in 1943.  
(Source: Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, 2008)



*Figure 3.11. Map showing Australia's current major highway and road networks used by grey nomads.*

(Source: Cridland, 2007)

population centres, coincided with the rapid expansion of the grey nomad phenomenon. The development of a sealed national highway network across Australia is not the sole reason for the growth in the grey nomad phenomenon, although it has seen the decline of Lee's (1966) 'intervening obstacles', allowing for greater levels of movement. Hence, grey nomads now have greater access to distant and regional destinations across Australia and they can get to these destinations in motor homes and campervans or in vehicles towing caravans.

### **3:6. Conclusion**

The regions comprising northern Australia are diverse, both in population, economies, landscape and climate. Areas on the east coast, the Top End, and northern Western Australia have varying degrees of population growth over recent times. In contrast, areas stretching from western Queensland, through Central Australia to the Pilbara coast, have experienced a decline in their permanent population. This decline can be attributed to changes in work place practices within the mining industry with the innovations of a fly-in/fly-out labour force and the difficulties of living in remote, isolated and sparsely populated regions where opportunities maybe limited. Yet, Bell and Ward (2000) concluded, that there has been an increase in the number of temporary movers visiting areas that are currently exhibiting a decline in their permanent population. Therefore, temporary movers, including grey nomads, are becoming important as they provide a supplementary source of income for many regional economies. Tourism provides directly \$3.4 billion to the study area, although the mining and oil exploration industries valued at \$27 billion are the largest industries. Nevertheless, tourism is gaining importance as a source of employment and income. Moreover, the seasonality of northern Australia's climate is conducive to seasonal movement. The warm clear days with low humidity of northern Australia's dry season, compared to the wet, cold weather of southern Australia at the same time of the year is a factor that helps encourage southern retirees to travel and temporarily reside in northern Australia. On the other hand, high temperatures, rainfall, and humidity, plus the threat of severe tropical cyclones, is a strong deterrent for prolonged visitation, especially as the climate in southern Australia is pleasant, mimicking the weather found in northern Australia during the dry season.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Methodology**

#### **4:1. Introduction**

An outline of the methodology used in this project will be presented in this chapter. The discussion will commence by showing the methodological processes involved in this study, from its conception to conclusion. The third sub-section highlights the procedures used for the selection of the study area and survey locations, such as caravan parks and camping areas. Grey nomads will be defined in the fourth sub-section in this chapter. A review of the techniques utilised for the surveying of grey nomads within caravan parks and camping areas will also be presented in sub-section five. The sixth sub-section provides information regarding the statistical methods used to examine the variations in grey nomad mobility, socio-economic/demographic characteristics, activities undertaken and expenditure patterns. The final sub-section in this chapter outlines the constraints and the possible biases within this project.

#### **4:2. Methodological Structure of This Project**

Fundamental to the successful completion of this project was the development of a structured methodological framework. Figure 4.1 outlines each major step that was undertaken during this project. Following this methodological framework, from its conception to final outcomes, allowed this project to progress in a sound and logical manner in accordance with proposed timelines, research aims and James Cook University's research protocols.

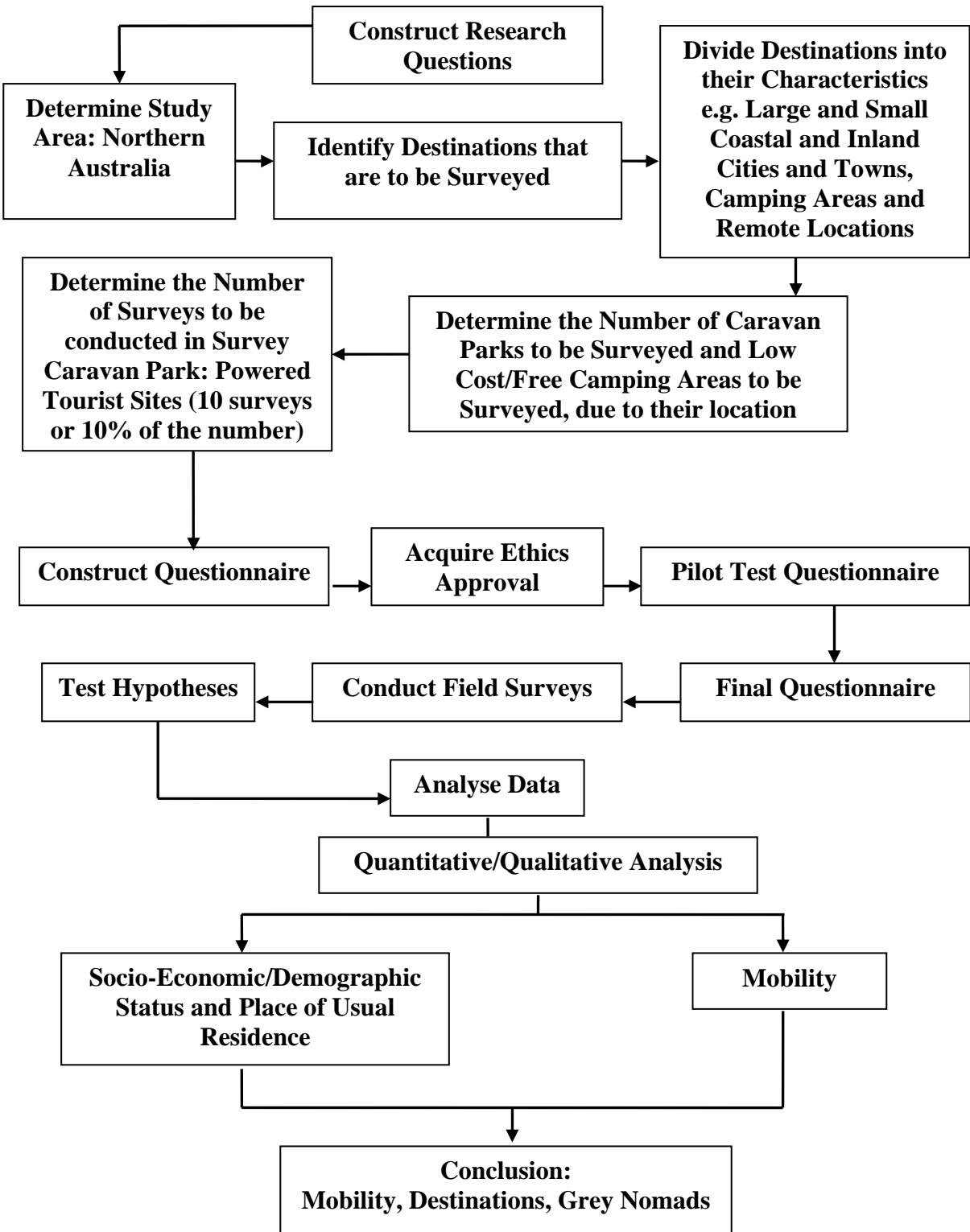


Figure 4:1. The outline of the methodological framework for this project.

### **4:3. Study Area**

The study area for this project, as discussed in Chapter Three, is the northern portion of Australia containing destinations north of the 23.5°S latitude (i.e. Tropic of Capricorn). Hence, grey nomads were surveyed at locations in the northern sections of the states of Queensland and Western Australia and the Northern Territory. A select number of destinations were chosen for surveying, due to the size of the study area, and the time required to travel and interview grey nomads,. A cross section of destinations in each state and territory was selected either on the basis of their location on major routes, because they are known tourism or service centres in regional Australia or in some cases, their remoteness (e.g. Gibb River Road, Lawn Hill). In addition, destinations were also selected to represent both inland and coastal destinations. Darwin was the only coastal destination surveyed in the Northern Territory, due to the absence of any other easily accessible coastal locations. Many destinations south of the Tropic of Capricorn, such as Hervey Bay, Mitchell, Alice Springs and Carnarvon are also frequented by large numbers of grey nomads. However, due to budgetary constraints, these destinations could not be included in this study. Furthermore, budgetary constraints, in addition to the size of the study area, required that the study area be divided into two sections for the purpose of surveying. Grey nomads visiting Queensland were surveyed in 2005, whilst grey nomads visiting the Northern Territory and Western Australia were surveyed in 2006. No repeat surveying of respondents were undertaken.

### **4:4. Selection of Destinations**

Destinations were selected due to their location (i.e. located on highway systems, remoteness, and convenience) and/or characteristics (i.e. size, tourist/service centres). These destinations were divided into tourist destinations, large coastal cities/towns, small coastal towns, large inland cities/towns, small inland towns, remote locations and camping areas. These types of destinations are representative of the locations grey nomads generally visit and stay whilst travelling. However, it should be stated that the number of each type of destinations surveyed may not be a proportional representation of the total number of destination types where grey

nomads reside for the winter. Furthermore, nor is the number of grey nomads surveyed at each destination type a proportional representation of the total number of grey nomads that choose to stay at each type of destination across Australia. A destination was considered to be located on the coast if it was situated on the coastal plains and within 20 kilometres of the coastline. Camping sites were divided into different geographical locations and/or categorized in accordance with the level of infrastructure present at each site. A camping site (including budget style accommodation) was classified as any site that cost less than \$15 dollars a night that was not a designated caravan park. For this project, a remote location was defined as any camping site more than 50 km from an urban locality (large or small) that required an individual to travel at least 50 kilometres on unsealed roads before arrival. Table 4.1 show the types of destinations surveyed, the parameters describing the project's definition of different sized urban locations, the number for each type of destinations surveyed and the sample obtained from each location.

#### **4:4:1. Methodologies for the Selection of Caravan Parks and Camping Areas**

Caravan parks within Queensland and the Northern Territory were identified using the 2003-2004 Royal Automobile Club of Queensland (RACQ) Travel Guides: *Experience Queensland* and *Experience South Australia and Northern Territory*. For Western Australia, the National Road Motoring Association's (NRMA) *Western Australia Experience 2003* edition was utilised. The 2004/05 and 2005/06 Telstra Yellow Pages online version (Telstra, 2004; 2005) was also used to identify any caravan parks that were not included in the RACQ and NRMA guides. In Mings' (1997) analysis of grey nomads visiting Far North Queensland, he identified that grey nomads primarily used powered tourist sites when residing in caravan parks during the winter. Therefore, identifying the number of powered tourist sites in a caravan park, assisted in determining the park's carrying capacity and the possible maximum number of grey nomads that it could accommodate. The RACQ and NRMA Travel Guides assisted in identifying the size of most caravan parks and the number of powered tourist sites available for grey nomads. Any caravan parks that were not listed in the RACQ and NRMA travel guide were contacted and asked: "How many powered tourist sites did their caravan park have available for travellers?"

*Table 4.1. The type and number of destinations surveyed in this study.*

<b>Types of Destinations</b>	<b>No. of Permanent Population</b>	<b>No. of Caravan Parks</b>	<b>Number of Locations</b>	<b>No. of Questionnaires</b>
Tourism Cities/Towns	$\geq 2\ 000$	$\geq 3$	5	112
Large Coastal Cities/Towns	$\geq 2\ 000$	$\geq 3$	6	148
Small Coastal Towns	$< 2\ 000$	$< 3$	9	119
Large Inland Cities/Towns	$\geq 1\ 000$	$\geq 2$	14	193
Small Inland Towns	$< 1\ 000$	$< 2$	11	120
Coastal Camping	NA	NA	7	75
Inland Camping (no permanent natural water)	NA	NA	8	27
Inland Camping (permanent natural water)	NA	NA	11	97
Inland camping (with washing facilities)	NA	NA	5	41
Remote Locations	NA	NA	6	32

NA = Not Applicable

Any caravan park with less than 50 powered tourist sites were omitted for selection in this study. The reason for this omission was due to the possibility that not all sites in small caravan parks may contain grey nomads, thereby reducing the prospect of obtaining a satisfactory sample size. In addition, many smaller caravan parks are often positioned in transient localities situated on main highways between towns, which are often characterised by late arrivals and early departures (i.e. a high number of overnight stays), making obtaining a sample difficult (Cridland, 2003). This omission may produce a slight bias in the data.

Once a destination was selected for surveying, the number of caravan parks and their location was identified within each destination. Determining the number of caravan parks suitable for surveying (i.e. more than 50 powered tourist sites) assisted in formulating how many and which parks would be surveyed at each selected destination. Only one caravan park was surveyed in towns and centres that had less than three caravan parks. For destinations with three to six suitable caravan parks, two caravan parks were surveyed. At centres that had more than six caravan parks, three parks were surveyed to obtain a greater cross section of the grey nomad population at that particular destination. To help ensure that a suitable sample size from within a caravan park/destination was obtained, a proportional probability to size sampling technique was used for the selection of caravan parks (Ernst, 2003). This technique allowed for a proportional representation of caravan parks in relation to the number of powered tourist sites at each destination. In other words, a caravan park with 100 sites suitable for grey nomads had twice the probability of being selected for surveying than a caravan park that had only 50 sites. Where more than one caravan park had to be surveyed at a destination, an attempt was made to select caravan parks in different spatial settings in order to minimise any biases produced by differences in locality (Cridland, 2003). For example, a caravan park located in a large coastal township on the foreshore may attract a different type of grey nomad than a caravan park at the same destination situated five to six kilometres from the coast and on the highway. This difference in location within a destination was identified by Cridland (2003) in his study of grey nomads visiting coastal destinations in northern Queensland. He identified that major variations existed in the mobility levels and demography between grey nomads residing in caravan parks on the Cairns Northern

Beaches compared to the grey nomads staying in Cairns City. To obtain a cross-section of caravan parks at a particular destination with three or more caravan parks, the location of the caravan park within the destination was taken into account. Caravan parks at these destinations were divided into locations that may have a high aesthetic value like a caravan park situated on the coast or on a river and parks with possible lower aesthetic value such as those located in town or on a highway. During the selection of caravan parks, once a caravan park located in a similar spatial setting was chosen, other parks in the same category were omitted for further selection.

The number of powered tourist sites at each surveyed caravan park determined the number of grey nomads that would be surveyed within that caravan park. As a general rule, a minimum sample of ten per cent of the powered tourist sites that contained grey nomads were sampled. For example, a minimum of fifteen grey nomads would be surveyed in a caravan park with 150 powered tourist sites. However, in caravan parks with less than 100 suitable sites, a minimum of ten questionnaires were obtained during each survey period. Wherever possible, additional questionnaires were sought, over and above the ten per cent threshold, in caravan parks that had high numbers of willing grey nomad participants.

Low-cost and free-camping sites were primarily selected on a convenience basis. These locations included camping areas such as roadside rest areas and sites located within national parks and state forests or any locality where grey nomads were observed camping overnight. In addition, some privately owned cattle stations which permit camping were also included in the survey. Most of these locations were identified using the '*Camps Australia Wide Three*' camping guide (Procter, 2005). Furthermore, during the survey period a small number of locations were identified through 'word of mouth' with others travellers. The small size of many camping locations across Australia made sampling ten per cent at some single destinations difficult. Therefore, as many grey nomads as possible were approached for surveying at each camping location. In the instances that survey numbers at camp sites were below ten, these camping destinations were grouped with the nearest camping destination, when possible, to make sufficient numbers for analysis.

#### **4:5. Grey Nomads**

For the purpose of this project, grey nomads were defined as any retired person over 50 years of age who were away from their place of usual residence for a period greater than one month. When two or more people were travelling together in a single vehicle, only one person per vehicle needed to be over 50 years of age and retired/semi-retired for inclusion in the study. In Australia, retirement age is generally 65 years for males and 63.5 years for females, although increasingly many Australians are choosing to enter into retirement at an early age. ABS (2000) found that almost 50 per cent of Australia's retirees retire prior to reaching the official retirement age. Therefore, reducing the age of grey nomads to 50 years allowed for the inclusion of those late middle-aged individuals who have taken early retirement. In addition, annual leave in Australia is normally four weeks (Denniss, 2003), so including those senior travellers who are away for a period greater than one month will exclude any individuals who are still in employment and on annual leave. However, those late middle-aged individuals (over the age of 50 years) on long service leave were included as their movement patterns may be similar to certain segments of the grey nomad population. This project also included those individuals who fit the age and retirement criteria for grey nomads, have no place of usual residence and are permanently living a peripatetic lifestyle.

##### **4:5:1. Surveying of Grey Nomads**

The survey methodology for this project involved the distribution of a questionnaire (see Appendices A and B). Semi-structured and structured face-to-face in-depth interviews with individuals fitting the selection criteria for a grey nomad were also undertaken during this research. Sampling was undertaken within caravan parks and free/low cost camping areas. Surveying of grey nomads were conducted on a convenience basis. Within caravan parks, surveys were conducted in the afternoon between the hours of 3 pm and 6 pm, a time known amongst grey nomads as 'Happy Hour', and when most grey nomads generally relax outside their caravan or motor home. Grey nomads in free/low cost camp sites were surveyed at different hours of

the day and at as many sites as possible during a day's travel. Only grey nomads relaxing outside their vehicle (i.e. caravan, motor home, camper van or camper trailer/tent) were approached. Individuals fitting the grey nomad criteria and willing to participate were asked to complete a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contained questions seeking information regarding their socio-economic/demographic status, mobility, activities and thoughts on travel. Questionnaires distributed within caravan parks were completed overnight and collected early next morning. The free/low cost camping questionnaires were shortened for ease of completion and to ensure a high return rate. In addition, for convenience and budgetary reasons, the collection methodology for camping questionnaires involved a returned postage paid envelope.

Only one questionnaire was distributed per vehicle, with the intention that it would be completed by a single member of that vehicle. However, many couples did complete the questionnaire together. Overall, 1 164 questionnaires were distributed to grey nomads: 371 amongst camping grey nomads and 793 to those residing in caravan parks. A total of 1 005 questionnaires were returned. However, 39 returned questionnaires were incorrectly completed and could not be used in this study (27 collected from caravan parks and 12 free/low cost camping surveys). Two completed postage questionnaires were returned too late and had to be omitted from the quantitative analysis. These late questionnaires were not entirely discarded as they contained valuable qualitative data. A total of 964 questionnaires were analysed in this study, consisting of 285 questionnaires from camping grey nomads and 679 questionnaires from grey nomads residing in caravan parks. These questionnaires contained information regarding the characteristics of 1 912 individual grey nomads. While most of the questionnaires were fully completed, a number of questions regarding mobility and socio-economic and demographic characteristics were left blank. Table 4.2 shows the responses to questions that were fully completed.

Field studies were conducted over a three year period. In 2004, field observations regarding grey nomad movement patterns across northern Queensland were conducted in July over a two week period. These observations assisted the principal investigator understand some of the rudimentary processes involving grey

*Table 4.2. The number of responses to particular mobility and socio-economic and demographic questions.*

Questions Regarding	No. Responses	
Type of retirement income	958	
Length of stay	948	
Length of trip	949	
Average daily kilometres travelled en route	946	
Average daily kilometres travelled at destination	915	
Average daily expenditure	908	
Health	432*	
	Male	Female
Age	932	927
Education	934	925
Pre-retirement employment	923	822

\* Health data was only collected in the 2006 survey. There was 453 health questionnaires distributed.

nomads (e.g. mobility; social interaction), and helped in formulating the two questionnaires. No surveying was conducted during this field trip. However, many travelling retirees were approached and discussions regarding movement patterns and attitudes towards travel were gathered, giving valuable insights into grey nomads and their mobility. Field surveys were conducted in two phases. Phase one involved surveying grey nomads travelling throughout northern Queensland during the months of June to August 2005. Phase two covered June until early September 2006, with grey nomads surveyed at various destinations in the Northern Territory and northern Western Australia. Due to the size of the study area and the shortness of the peak visitation season, the surveying of different states and territory on separate years was necessary in order to gather responses from a large number of grey nomads.

#### **4:5:2. The Questionnaire and Interviews with Grey Nomads**

Prior to the commencement of the main study, ethics approval was sought and granted (see Appendix C), and a pilot study trialling the questionnaire was undertaken. The pilot study took place during 2004-05 and consisted of asking ten known grey nomads from South West Rocks in New South Wales to provide responses based upon their last winter trip to northern Australia. None of the completed pilot questionnaires were used in the actual study. Any questions respondents had difficulty in completing were either omitted or reworded in the final questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this study was similar to Mings' (1997) survey instrument, with many of the questions regarding a grey nomad's socio-economic and demographic status being identical. The questionnaire was divided into three sections (see Figure 4.2). Section one of the questionnaire gathered details about grey nomads' usual place of residence and data regarding his or her mobility. In this section, information was collected about the length of a grey nomad's trip, number of past trips, lengths of stays, kilometres travelled in a day, routes taken, frequency of camping and caravan parks stays and destinations visited. Section two obtained information on the activities undertaken whilst travelling, a grey nomad's attitude towards travelling (i.e. motivation, liked and dislikes) and thoughts regarding life and living the grey nomad lifestyle. Section three of the questionnaire contained

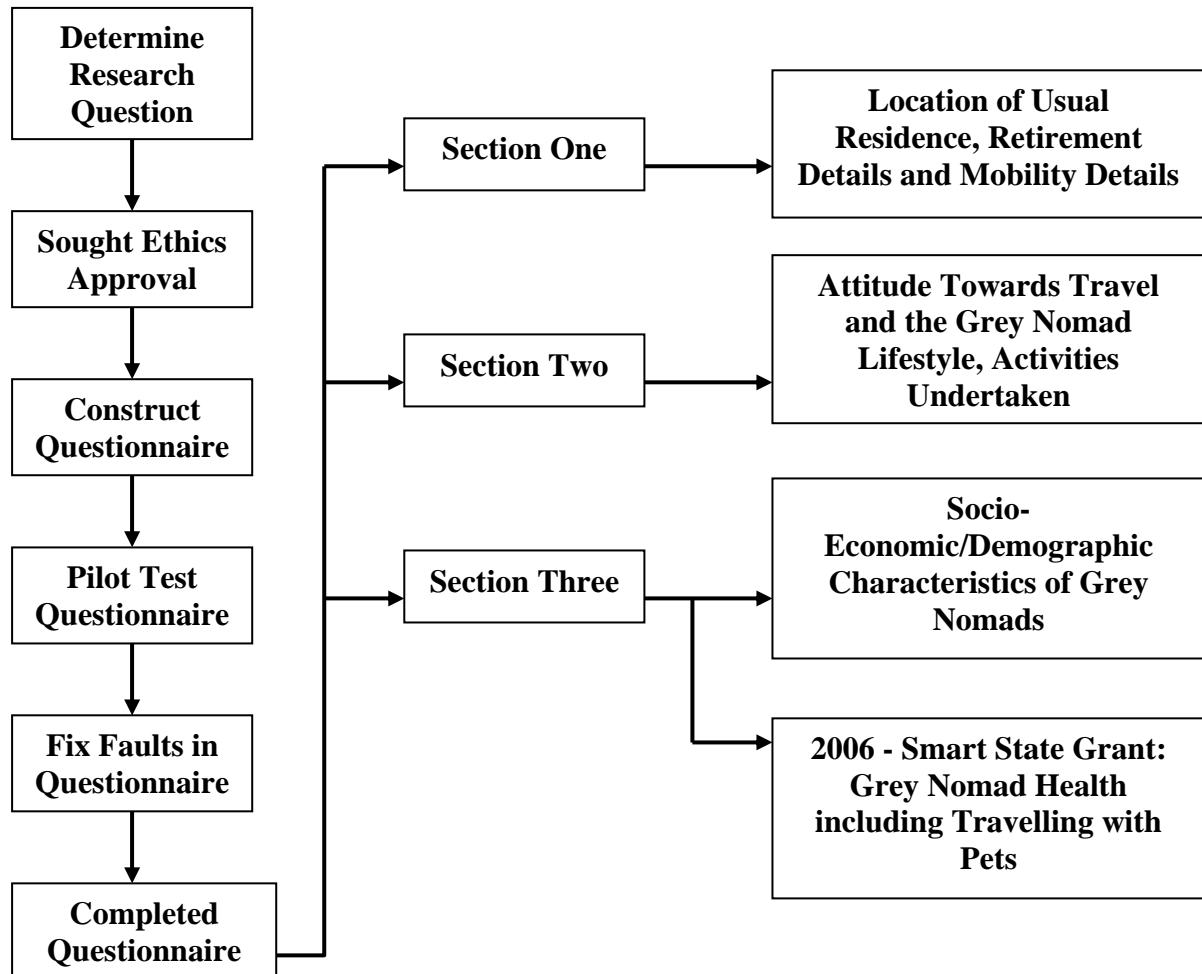


Figure 4.2. The process of the constructing the questionnaire and its final structure

questions regarding the socio-economic/demographic status of grey nomads (i.e. questions regarding a grey nomad's age, gender, expenditure patterns, health and level of education). In the 2006 questionnaire, 453 questionnaires had additional questions added to this section regarding a grey nomad's health and if pets were present on their journey. Health questions were added to satisfy the requirements of a Queensland Government Smart State grant. Pet questions were added because a large number of grey nomads were observed during the 2005 survey period travelling with pets and many had issues different to grey nomads travelling without pets. In addition, this section also detailed information on additional individuals travelling in the same vehicle. Analysing the differences in grey nomad mobility, attitude towards travel and lifestyle, as well as different socio-economic and demographic statuses would help differentiate grey nomads into different sub-groups.

No direct income questions were asked in this study as it was deemed too invasive. Mings (1997) in his research into grey nomads used characteristics such as the type of occupation prior to retirement and the type of vehicle driven as a reflection of a grey nomad's financial status. Similar attributes were used in this study to identify the financial status of grey nomads. In addition, adding the type of retirement funding, home ownership and level of education achieved may also provide insights into a grey nomad's financial status. However, expenditure information was obtained from grey nomads, to help ascertain the benefits different sub-groups of grey nomads may have on certain types of destinations and to provide insights into how grey nomads may alter their expenditure and movement patterns as the cost of travel (i.e. fuel and accommodation cost) increases in the future.

Semi-structured and audio recorded structured interviews were also conducted. These interviews were completed in a variety of caravan parks, camping areas and remote locations. The semi-structured interviews had a duration of ten to 20 minutes depending upon the interviewee's or the interviewer's timetable. These interviews usually took place prior to the distribution of the questionnaire to a grey nomad. Information gathered during these interviews were transcribed into field diaries. Comments from 776 grey nomads were entered into field diaries. The majority of these grey nomads also completed questionnaires. They gave valuable

insights into such matters as a grey nomad's attitude towards travel and their social interaction with other travellers. Thirty-six, 20 to 40 minute, structured interviews were also conducted. During these interviews, questions were asked regarding a grey nomad's opinion on travel, reasons for travelling, their attitude on life in retirement and their social interaction with grey nomads and other travellers. All structured audio recorded interviews were later transcribed and stored on the principal investigator's computer and CD rom and stored in accordance with university ethical guidelines, in the principal investigator's office.

#### **4:6. Analysis of Data**

This project primarily involves a quantitative analysis involving non-parametric analytical techniques. However, qualitative data was obtained and used to support the results from the quantitative analysis. All quantitative data was analysed in the statistical package of SPSS (version 12 and 13 for Windows). For ease of analysis, some continuous variables were converted into categorical data (e.g. groups relating to age, length of stay, time away, and number of past trips). Furthermore, for the purpose of this study, the significance level for statistical analysis was set at a .05 level, unless adjustments were required in accordance to the Bonferroni adjustment guidelines (discussed later).

##### **4:6:1. Non-Parametric and Statistical Tests for this Project**

Due to the non-parametric nature of the data, which could not be easily normalised, Kruskal Wallis, Mann Whitney and Chi-square tests were preformed on various grey nomad characteristics obtained from the questionnaire. In addition, basic descriptive statistics (e.g. means, frequency) were also used to highlight variations in grey nomad socio-economic/demographic characteristics and their mobility. Non-parametric tests are not as robust and stringent as their parametric counterparts and may not clearly identify differences that could exist between variables. Parametric tests require data to have a normal distribution. However, in many social statistical samples, non-normality of the data is a common occurrence (Daniel, 1990). Some

data collected in this study showed a normal distribution (e.g. age), but the majority of data showed no normality. Variables including lengths of stay at a destination, length of trip, number of past trips, time of departure and return, daily expenditure and kilometres travelled (en route and at a destination) showed a skewed distribution. Furthermore, not all of this data (e.g. expenditure, length of stay and length of trip) could be successfully transformed to show normality. Hence, parametric testing was not possible and non-parametric methodologies were utilised. The major assumptions for non-parametric testing are that the sample is taken randomly and that each sample is an independent observation.

A Kruskal Wallis test examined the differences in three or more categorical groups within a variable against an independent continuous variable. A Kruskal Wallis test is the non-parametric version of a One-Way Test of Variance (i.e. One-Way ANOVA), but instead of means it converts the scores within each group into ranks. The mean rank for each group is calculated and compared, resulting in a significant value being determined. The Mann Whitney test is the non-parametric alternative to the parametric independent sample t-test. Therefore, a Mann-Whitney test identifies if a significant difference exists between two categorical groups within a variable against a continuous variable. Whereas the independent sample t-test compares the means of two groups, the Mann-Whitney test actually compares the median of those two groups. The variable scores of the two groups are converted into ranks and these ranks are evaluated to determine if significant differences exist (Pallant, 2005; Stats Direct, 2006). In the event that a significant difference was identified in the Kruskal Wallis test, a Mann-Whitney test was preformed on the individual groups within each categorical variable, similar to a Post Hoc test. This method identified which groups were significantly different from each other. A Bonferroni adjustment was used to correct the significance level in the event that a Post Hoc test was required using the Mann-Whitney test. A Bonferroni adjustment is calculated by dividing the alpha level by n (i.e. number of tests). The adjustment is required when multiple tests for statistical significance are undertaken on the same data (Bland and Altman, 1995).

A Pearson's Chi-square test was used to determine the existence of a relationship/association between two categorical variables within a cross-tabulation

table. Categorical variables, for example, such as the type of vehicle driven by a grey nomad can be tested against the type of retirement income they receive or destinations they resided it identify relationships. In other words, do more grey nomads receiving a pension stay at camping type destinations and do they drive motor homes rather than tow a caravan? The Chi-square test explored if statistical differences existed between variables and the cross-tabulation table provided the proportion of each different characteristics between the two variables being tested. In addition, a Cramer's V coefficient's test was also conducted (Gravetter and Wallnau, 2000; Pallant, 2005). A Cramer's V reports the strength of the association between the two variables being cross-tabulated. It provides a similar result as a Pearson's correlation coefficient, ranging from -1 to 1, with 0 indicating no relationship and -1 or 1 indicating a perfect relationship (Seaman, 2001). Furthermore, a test to identify the adjusted standardised residuals (ASR) scores was performed on each cell within the cross-tabulation table. An ASR identifies which group or groups (i.e. cells) within the cross tabulation matrix are lower or higher than the expected outcome, similar to a Post Hoc test. Hence, this technique is useful for assessing whether the observed and expected data are consistent (Haberman, 1979). If an ASR is “greater than 1.96 or less than –1.96, there is a less than .05 probability of it occurring by chance, and it is considered to be significant” (Nishimura, Waryszak and King, 2007: 280).

#### **4:6:2. The Conversion of the Raw Data for Statistical Analysis**

Grey nomads generally travel as a couple in a single vehicle. These individuals would have identical mobility but may have a different demography. To make statistical analyses of the data set easier, in the event that a vehicle had more than one occupant, certain characteristics such as age and number of years in retirement were averaged per vehicle. This method provided a mean for each grey nomad vehicle. These means were then used to analyse the grey nomad population for statistical differences in socio-economic/demographic characteristics and variations in mobility.

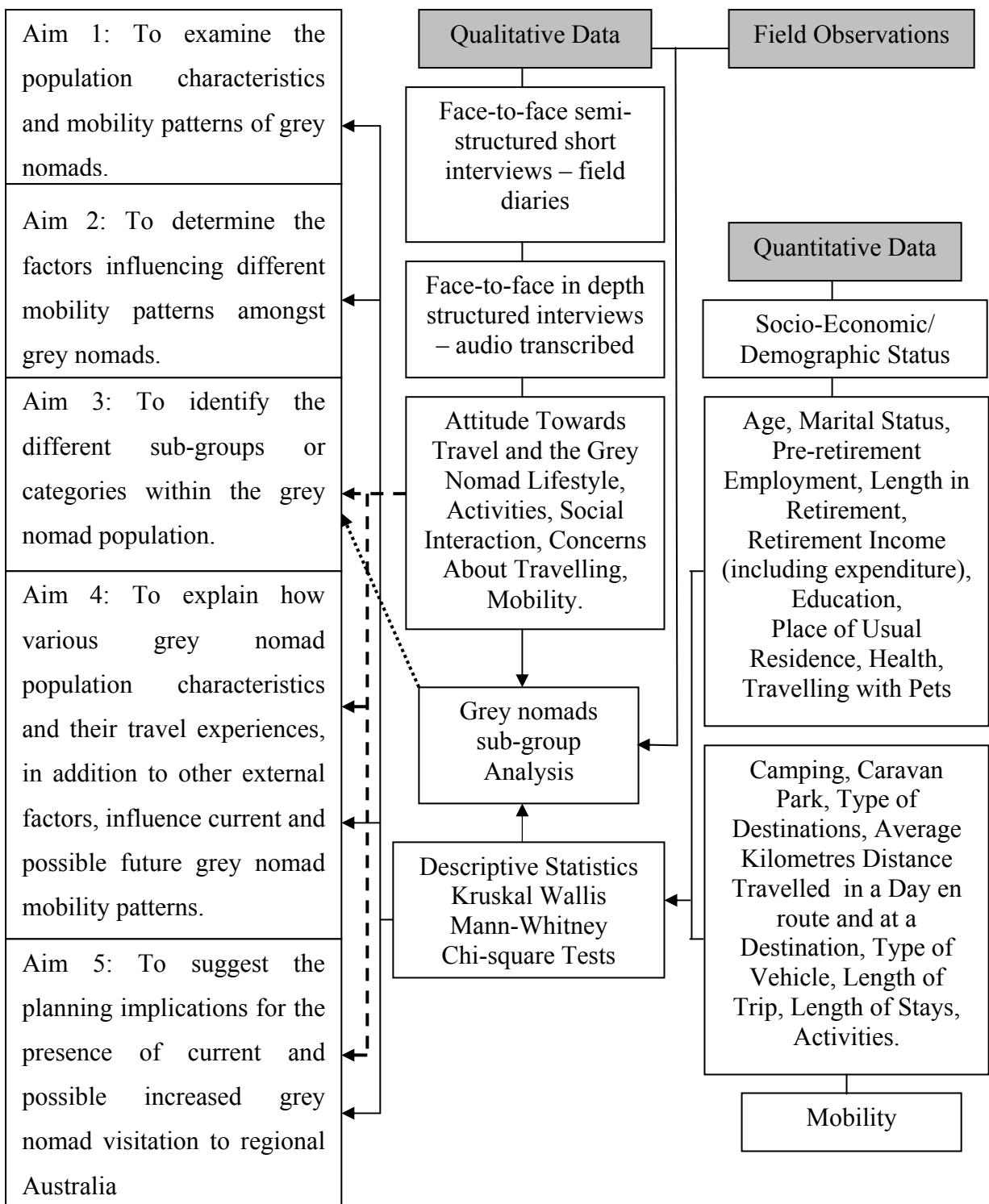
Some continuous data analysed in this project was converted into categorical data. Individual variables such as age, length of stay, and length of trip for each grey

nomad were categorised/divided into smaller sub-groups. For example, the age of grey nomads were sub-divided into five year increments, starting with grey nomads aged between 50 to 54 years (as group one), and continued, so forth, to include grey nomads aged 75 year and over (group six). The majority of categorical variables were tested using Mann-Whitney and Kruskal Wallis tests against different continuous variables for significance differences. When two categorical variables like type of destinations and type of pension scheme were analysed, a chi-square test was preformed.

Destinations were also categorised into groups based upon size and location, and in the case of camping locations the level of infrastructure such as tables, bins and toilets (see Table 4.1). Variables such as age, length of stay and type of vehicles grey nomads' drive were analysed using chi-square, Kruskal Wallis and Mann-Whitney tests against types of destinations. Performing these tests permitted scrutiny of the differences between the type of grey nomads visiting particular destinations and helped categorise grey nomads into sub-populations. Moreover, the mobility of grey nomads across different state boundaries could also be analysed. In addition, the differences relating to the spatial distribution of destinations and how this factor influenced mobility could be examined. For example, in areas where destinations are sparsely distributed and the distance required to travel between urban localities is great (i.e. greater than 200 km), does the mobility level of grey nomads alter in comparison to areas where urban localities are more clustered (e.g. north-western Western Australia vs. east coast of Queensland)?

#### **4:7. Addressing the Aims**

This sub-section discusses how each project aims was addressed. In addition, it will identify which particular data or types of data were used to address each particular aim. Figure 4.2 shows the analytical process for addressing each of the aims in this study, including variables which were tested and the statistical methods used to determine differences and similarities within the grey nomad population.



*Figure 4:3. The outline of what analytical methodology was utilised to examine each project aim. The different types of lines present which analysis addressed a particular Aim.*

**4:7:1. Addressing Aim One**

The first aim of this study was to examine the population characteristics and mobility patterns of grey nomads. This aim was addressed primarily from responses obtained from questions within the questionnaire regarding a grey nomad's level of mobility and their socio-economic and demographic characteristics. Mobility questions analysed included average daily distance travelled whilst en route to a destination and once at a destination, length of journey and stays at a particular destination, trip planning, type of vehicle they used in their travel and the type of destinations they visited. Socio-economic and demographic questions analysed included age, sex, marital status, type of retirement income, pre-retirement employment, time in retirement, place of usual residence and information regarding level of expenditure. The variables selected for testing in this section were chosen on the basis of knowledge obtained from field observations and interviews with grey nomads. Some socio-economic/demographic variables such as age, retirement income and expenditure patterns were also chosen as they were known factors identified within the literature as contributing to alter travel behaviour (Backman *et. al.* 1999; Carson and Waller, 2002; Horneman *et. al.*, 2002; Onyx and Leonard, 2005; 2007). Descriptive analyses (i.e. range, averages, and proportions) were used to identify major characteristics amongst grey nomads. As past studies into the grey nomad phenomenon have examined their socio-economic and demographic characteristics, fulfilling this aim does not contribute significantly to furthering the current knowledge about grey nomads and their movement patterns. However, it does indicate whether the survey population was representative compared to past studies into grey nomads and provides the reader with a basic understanding of who are grey nomads.

**4:7:2. Addressing Aim Two**

The second aim of this study was to determine the factors influencing different mobility patterns amongst grey nomads. To fulfil this aim, differences in mobility patterns and socio-economic characteristics identified in Aim One, in addition to

activities undertaken whilst away were identified and compares the differences discussed. The statistical tests used in this analysis were Mann-Whitney, Kruskal-Wallis and Chi-square. Different characteristics of grey nomads mobility, such as trip length, vehicles used, length of stays, kilometres travelled, destinations visited, number of past trips were tested and analysed. Differing types of mobility were also tested against different population traits, such as age, place of usual residence and retirement income. Results from these analyses helped highlight whether statistically, significant differences existed within certain groups of grey nomads. For example, did younger (i.e. 55-59 years of age) or recently retired grey nomads travel more kilometres in a day than grey nomads who were older (i.e. older than 75 years of age) or had been retired for many years. If notable differences existed between different age groups or groups of grey nomads who have been retired for similar amount of years, then age and length of time in retirement can influence levels of mobility. In addition, responses from all the face-to-face interviews (i.e. both in-depth and semi-structured) and field observations were also used to support the statistical findings.

Most studies into grey nomad mobility have only ever focused on basic movement characteristics like average length of stay and kilometres travelled. No past studies have examined if variations exist in grey nomad movement patterns and the factors influencing any variation in mobility, especially the routes taken by grey nomads. In Chapter Seven route maps are presented showing the proportion and directional flow of grey nomads from different states. These maps were produced from the responses to the questionnaire on highway networks used during the trip. As part of each questionnaire, each grey nomad travel party was asked to highlight the highway/road networks they'd travelled on to arrive at the destinations where they completed the questionnaire. Furthermore, each grey nomad was also asked to identify his/her intended route after finishing his/her stay at a particular destination. Each highway/road route used by each grey nomad travel party was coded and recorded on a spreadsheet, showing the direction of movement and the volume of grey nomad usage. This analysis was undertaken on a state-by-state basis depending on where a grey nomad travel party had their usual place of residence. Understanding different mobility patterns and what factors may alter movement may provide planners with insights into future movement trends and satisfies Aim Two.

#### 4:7:3. Addressing Aim Three

The third aim of this study was to identify the different sub-groups or categories within the grey nomad population. No past studies have attempted to divide grey nomads into sub-groups, especially in relation to their mobility and socio-economic and demographic characteristics. Hence, understanding the differences within the grey nomad population could have major planning significance, as particular groups of grey nomads may place different demands on services and infrastructure at their host destinations. Data used to determine the different sub-groups of grey nomads was obtained from in-depth and short semi-structured interviews, field observations and data deriving from the questionnaires. The information from interviews and field observations used to formulate sub-groups of grey nomads included attitude towards travel, thoughts on life in retirement, preference on destinations visited, social interaction with other grey nomads and travellers and the activities they like to undertake once at a destination. Data from the questionnaires was used to help determine grey nomad sub-groups included differences in mobility such as length of stay, length of trip, number of past trips, kilometres travelled in a day (i.e. at a destination and en route), activities undertaken, vehicle types and choice of destinations. These variables were analysed for statistical differences within and between different groups of grey nomads using Mann-Whitney, Kruskal-Wallis and Chi-square tests. The differing socio-economic and demographic characteristics of surveyed grey nomads were analysed against mobility data. Identifying which grey nomad variables were statistically different from each other, helped to determine which variables were important for discriminating one particular grey nomad sub-group from another. Highlighting these different grey nomad characteristics and categorising them in accordance of their particular mobility and population traits led to six identifiable groups of grey nomads being identified: enthusiast; sun seeker; semi-wanderer; budget; wanderer; and adventurous.

To identify which sub-population a particular grey nomad belonged to a certain, a linear model was developed. This model used predetermined grey nomad mobility and socio-economic/demographic variables, which were identified as being important discriminating characteristics from the statistical analysis and field

observations and interviews (see Figures 4.4; 4.5; 4.6). As most grey nomads have different levels of mobility and population characteristics (e.g. different length of retirements, expenditure), some variables analysed in this study were scaled to represent these different attributes. Variables relating to mobility, such as distance travelled in a day (i.e. en route and at a destination) were divided into high, moderate and low levels and lengths of stays at a destination were divided into different levels of durations (i.e. short stays, long stays). Similarly, some socio-economic and demographic characteristics were also scaled like time in retirement and levels of expenditure. Whilst some grey nomads surveyed did have certain traits, which were similar (i.e. so characteristics of more than one group), the majority will have a number of different characteristics that will allow them to be classified into different sub-populations. The solid line in Figures 4.4 to 4.6 is the path used to determine enthusiasts, semi-wanderer and wander grey nomads. The dashed lines show the path used to determine sun seekers, budget and adventurous grey nomads. The solid shaded boxes in Figures 4.4 to 4.6 show an attribute that belongs to a particular grey nomad sub-group. The striped boxes are attributes that are shared. There were 236 grey nomads surveyed who could not be classified as their mobility, activities undertaken and socio-economic/demographic characteristics placed them into more than one particular sub-group.

Figure 4.4 shows the path and variables used to determine an enthusiast grey nomad and a sun seeker grey nomad. In Figure 4.4 most of the traits between enthusiast and sun seeker grey nomads are similar; the only major discriminating difference between them is the activities they prefer to undertake, the use of camping areas and the vehicle they drive. An enthusiast's principal recreational activity is fishing or fossicking for gemstones or gold and undertaking these activities is a strong motivational factor for undertaking such a trip, whereas sun seekers generally are less active and prefer to just relax, mostly in a coastal setting. Moreover, due to the nature of their activities, enthusiasts prefer to tow their caravan with a four wheel drive vehicle and rarely will they travel in a conventional vehicle (i.e. sedan or station wagon) like some sun seekers. In addition, sun seekers will not seek out camping locations, whereas some enthusiasts will reside at camping localities. Conversely, Figure 4.5 represents the characteristics that depict a semi-wanderer and

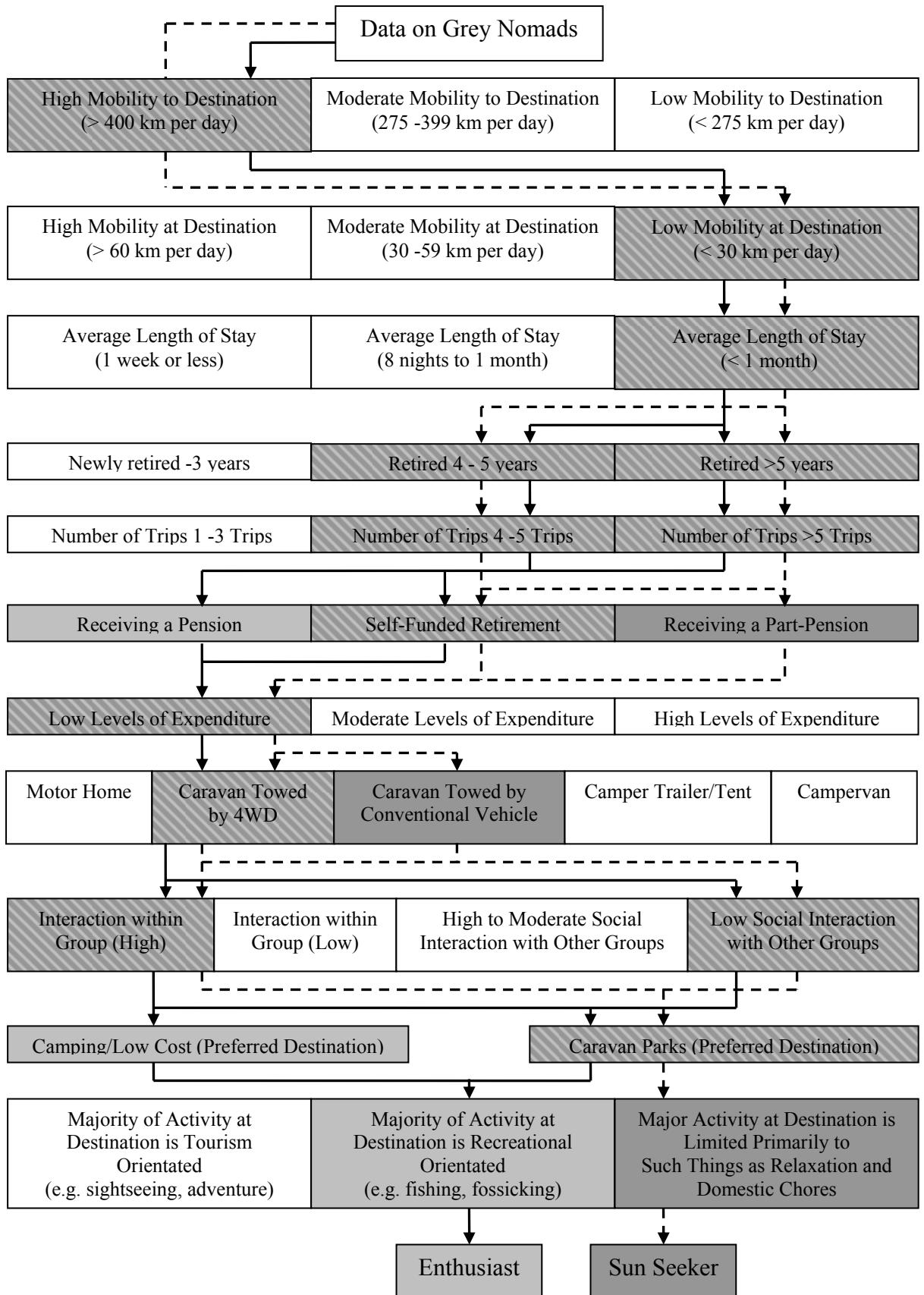


Figure 4.4. Chart showing the variables and path used to determine enthusiast and sun seeker grey nomads.

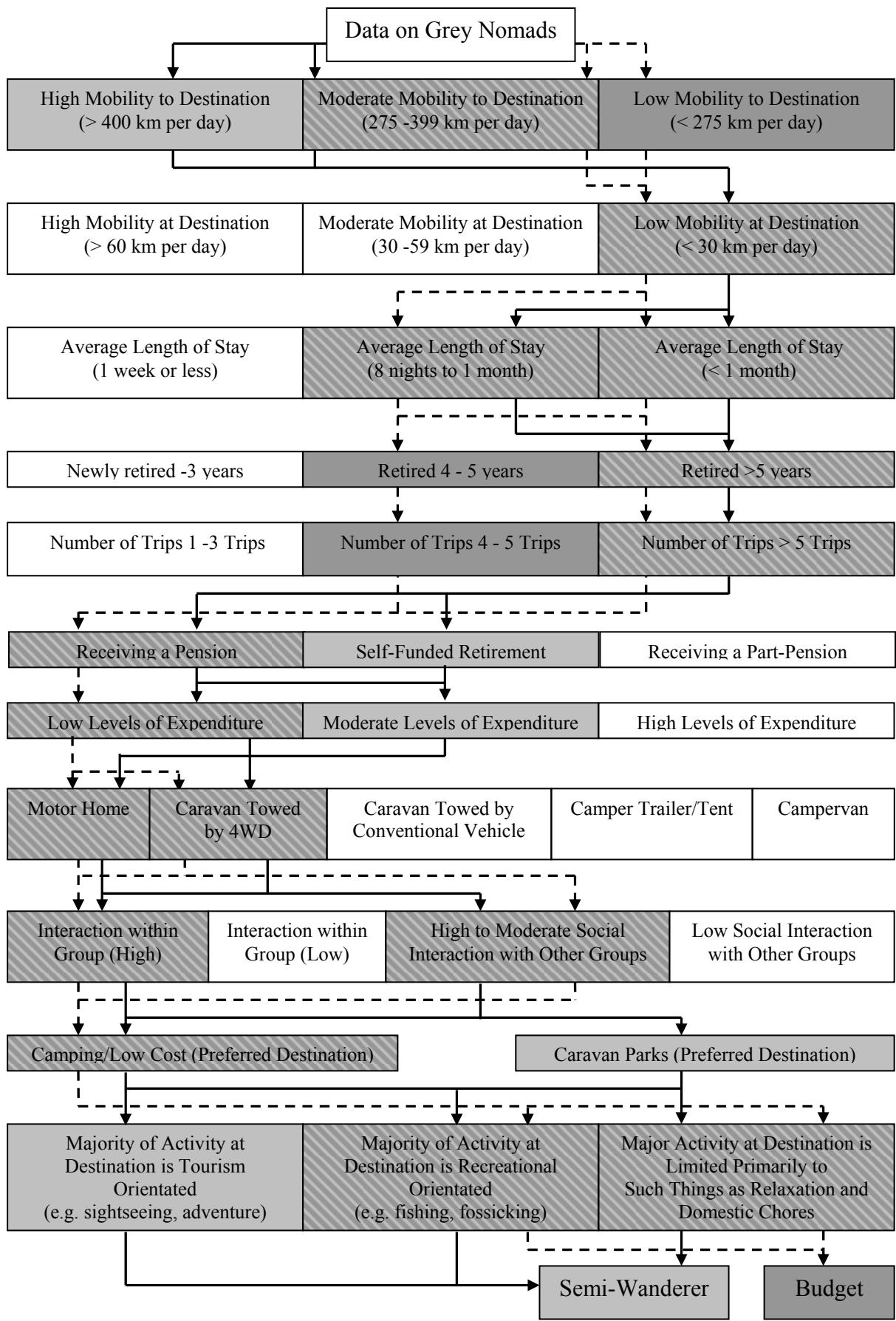


Figure 4.5. Chart showing the variables and path used to determine semi-wanderer and budget grey nomads.

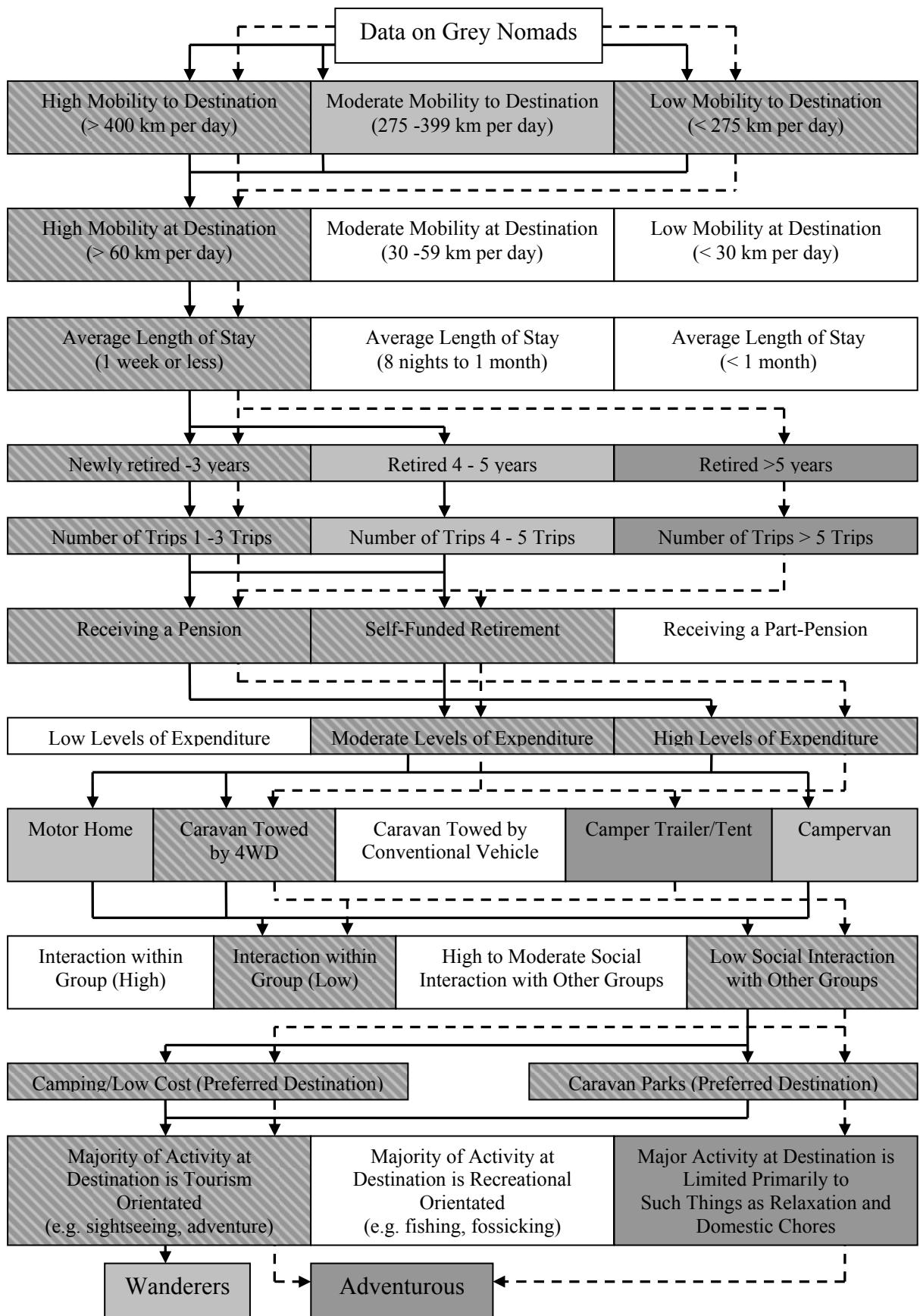


Figure 4.6. Chart showing the variables and path used to determine wanderer and adventurous grey nomads.

a budget grey nomad and Figure 4.6 shows how a wanderer and adventurous grey nomad were determined. Both these figures indicate the similarities and differences between these particular grey nomad sub-groups. Following the process laid out in Figures 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6, 827 grey nomads were able to be classified into a particular sub-population (see Table 4.3). The 138 grey nomads that could not be classified into a particular sub-population had too many traits which placed them in more than one sub-population. It needs to be stressed that due to a sampling bias relating to the number of grey nomads surveyed at each particular type of destination, the sample population may not be a true representation of the total grey nomad population. The discussion of grey nomad sub-groups is addressed in-depth in Chapter Nine.

*Table 4.3. The number of surveyed grey nomads that were classified into a particular sub-population.*

Sub-Population	No Identified
Wanderer	202
Semi-Wanderer	178
Budget	154
Adventurous	43
Sun Soaker	147
Enthusiast	102
Unclassified	138

#### **4:7:4. Addressing Aim Four**

The fourth aim of this project was to explain how various grey nomad population characteristics and their travel experiences, in addition to other external factors like rising travel costs, influence current and possible future grey nomad mobility patterns. To fulfil this aim, data provided from the questionnaires regarding the movement patterns of grey nomads, such as directional movement and routes they travelled upon during their current trip, were examined. The results from this analysis of current grey nomad movement patterns is presented in Chapter Seven, with route

maps showing the directional flow and the proportion of movement in a given direction for each state a grey nomad began their current journey. Identifying the factors altering grey nomad mobility patterns may be used as a tool by planners in understanding the increase or decline of nomad numbers in regional areas. Furthermore, it may help them to establish the correct types and levels of services and infrastructure required at particular destinations, in order to attract or to manage current grey nomad visitation.

Insights into possible future movement patterns were obtained from face-to-face interviews (i.e. both in-depth and short semi-structured interviews), and from the questionnaires. During the face-to-face interviews with grey nomads, questions were asked regarding their attitude toward future mobility due to rising fuel costs and other increasing travel related expenses, caravan park closures, restrictions on camping, overcrowding in caravan parks and the commercialisation of certain destinations. Possible future movement intentions obtained from the face-to-face interviews with grey nomads are presented in Chapter Six. Furthermore, mobility, socio-economic and demographic data from the questionnaire surveys analysed to fulfil Aims One and Two, were also examined to provide additional insights into future movement patterns. While this study was not a longitudinal examination of grey nomad movements, considering the different attitudes, mobility patterns and socio-economic/demographic status of grey nomads at different stages of their retirement (i.e. newly retired – long time retired) and their level of travel experience provided insights on how a grey nomad's mobility may change throughout their travelling lifecycle. The possible changes to a grey nomad's mobility throughout their lifecycle are explained in Chapter Nine.

#### **4:7:5. Addressing Aim Five**

The last aim of this study is to suggest the planning implications for the current and possible increase of grey nomad visitation to regional Australia. To fulfil this aim, current and possible future mobility and settlement patterns explored in Aims Two, Three and Four were examined. In addition, face-to-face interviews with service providers (i.e. caravan park proprietors, emergency services personnel) also

gave valuable insights into the current and possible future implications of grey nomad visitation. Analysing which type of grey nomad was likely to visit a particular type of destination and understanding how each sub-group of grey nomads may alter their movement patterns in an environment of rising travel costs and caravan park closures, gave possible insights into future visitation patterns. Each sub-group of grey nomads have different implications for their host communities, due to differences in levels of expenditure, lengths of stay and activities undertaken. Hence, different grey nomads consume different types of services. Understanding where a particular type of grey nomad may choose to reside and what services they require may determine the possible impacts they will have on their host communities.

#### **4:8. Project's Assumptions**

This project made an assumption regarding the type of grey nomad visiting a particular location. This study assumed that a grey nomad who was surveyed in a caravan park or camping area will have a greater tendency to reside in that type of accommodation throughout their entire trip. The principal investigator recognised that the majority of grey nomads who camp may also occasionally reside in a caravan park during their trip and vice versa. Anecdotal evidence suggested that only a small proportion of the grey nomad population actually resided solely in camping areas for their entire journey. Conversely, the numbers of grey nomads who stay solely in a caravan park for their entire journey is considered much higher than for those who solely camp. For this project, the assumption that a grey nomad residing in a camping area or caravan park will seek out that type of accommodation throughout their entire trip was made for ease of statistical analysis. However, the principal investigator is aware that this assumption may bias the data in regards to mobility.

#### **4:9. Constraints and Biases**

This project was constrained by funding and the length of survey period. Grey nomads usually begin their travel across northern Australia in the months of May and June, returning generally around late August to the beginning of October. Therefore,

the surveying of grey nomads was limited to these months. Moreover, grey nomads travel to various destinations across the entire country; thus surveying visiting grey nomads at a variety of locations across the entire continent is expensive, as well as time consuming and cannot be done simultaneously. Funding could not be obtained to survey grey nomads across all of northern Australia in one survey period and to repeat the survey in following years. Surveying the study area in one go may have also limited the diversity of destinations sampled, and possibly resulted in fewer grey nomads being surveyed. Thus, these constraints led to the project's study area being reduced to cover only tropical Australia, excluding Hervey Bay, Alice Springs and Carnarvon or those sub-tropical destinations which grey nomads frequent in large numbers. Furthermore, as a result of the size of the study area and budget constraints, different states and territories were surveyed in different years (Queensland, 2005; Northern Territory and Western Australian, 2006).

Due to the size of the study area, the surveying of the grey nomads needed to be conducted over a two year period, creating a slight bias as rising fuel costs over the intervening twelve month period may have influenced and altered mobility levels during this period. Some destinations were surveyed at the beginning of the peak season (i.e. June), while other destinations were surveyed at the end (i.e. late August-early September). This difference in survey times may have also created a bias. In addition, regional factors like climate and festivals may have influenced the time of visitation and mobility. In addition, no data from grey nomads from the Northern Territory were collected. Three Northern Territorian grey nomads were approached but all refused to participate in the study. The Northern Territory has a small aged population; hence, the absence of Northern Territory grey nomads in this study should produce little bias in the data.

There was also the problem relating to the high number of repeat encounters with groups, individual and couples of grey nomads at different destinations. These encounters were not just isolated to each individual survey period. There were five grey nomads who were surveyed in 2005 that were encountered again during the 2006 survey period. To limit the level on repeat encounters with already surveyed grey nomads, it was necessary to spend additional time at some destinations. This time allowed surveyed grey nomads to move on and a fresh group to arrive.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Socio-Economic and Demographic Results**

#### **5:1. Introduction**

The socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the grey nomads surveyed at destinations across northern Australia in 2005 and 2006 are presented in this chapter. Characteristics that will be examined include marital status, age, location of usual summer address (i.e. permanent address), types of pre-retirement employment, length of retirement, type of retirement funding (i.e. self funded, pension, part pension), level of education, state of health, and expenditure patterns. These characteristics were selected for analysis on the basis of previous studies that have examined a grey nomad's socio-economic and demographic characteristics (Pollard, 1996; Mings, 1997; Oryx and Leonard, 2005, 2007)

The last section of this chapter will examine whether grey nomads are a homogenous population and how socio-economic and demographic differences may influence destination choice. The focus of this section will be an analysis of the different characteristics between grey nomads who prefer to camp and those who would rather reside in caravan parks. Using non parametric methods described in Chapter Four, the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of grey nomads will be tested for statistically significant differences. Onyx and Leonard (2005; 2007) noted different traits in attitude towards travel amongst grey nomads camping and those residing in caravan parks. However, they did not examine if any socio-economic and demographic traits influence a grey nomad's desire or need to camp rather than stay in caravan parks. If significant differences exist in the socio-economic/demographic characteristics in relation to their choice of accommodation type, this will indicate that grey nomads are not homogenous and justify further examination to identify different sub-groups.

## 5:2. Marital/Relationship Status

Past studies into the marital status of grey nomads indicated that most travel as a male and female couple. Results from this study confirmed that the majority of the grey nomads surveyed do travel together as a heterosexual couple. Nine hundred and forty-eight grey nomad travel parties completed the martial status question on the questionnaire. Approximately 95 per cent of grey nomads surveyed were travelling as a male and female couple (see Table 5.1). Same sex couples consisted of less than two per cent of the surveyed population (n=9 couples). Male same sex couples (n=2) in the sample comprised of one father and son combination, and the other in a homosexual relationship. All female same sex couples (n=7 couples) stated they too were in a relationship. Singles made up three per cent of the surveyed population (n=31). Female grey nomads had a higher tendency to travel as a single, with eighteen being surveyed. Thirteen males were also travelling as singles. The majority of single males were travelling independently (n=11). Most single females (n=13), however, travelled within a group, usually travelling in small parties of two to four vehicles with other singles or grey nomad couples. The majority of singles were either widowed (male, n=7; female, n=7) or divorced (male, n=5; female, n=2).

*Table 5.1. The types of relationship status amongst surveyed grey nomads (per travel unit)*

Type of Relationship	Travelling Unit No.	Percentage of Surveyed Population (%)
Married	862	91
De Facto	44	5
Travelling with friend (not in relationship)	2	<1
Singles		
Male	13	1
Female	18	2
Same Sex		
Male	2	<1
Female	7	<1
Undisclosed	16	Not included

### 5:3. Age

Most studies into a grey nomad's age have concluded that the majority are early to mid 60 years of age (Mings, 1997; Grenier *et. al.*, 2003; Oryx and Leonard, 2005). Information regarding a grey nomad's age was based upon responses from 881 travel parties. Results from these questionnaires concluded that the mean age of the male grey nomads surveyed was 65.4 years (n=881) and females 62.6 years (n=879). Furthermore, the most frequent age response for males was 67 years (median 65 years) and for females the response was 62 years (medium 63 years). The mean age of grey nomads per vehicle was 64.2 years. Figure 5.1 shows the age distribution for the surveyed male grey nomads and Figure 5.2 represents the ages of the surveyed female grey nomads. Fifteen females and two male grey nomads were aged under the sample methodology cut off point of 50 years. These individuals were travelling with a grey nomad partner who fitted the sampling criteria; hence they were included in this study. These results indicate that the age differences between some grey nomads travelling together can be quite high. The highest age difference between a male grey nomad and a female travelling together in the one vehicle was 20 years (n=1), but the average was three to five years. The ages of male grey nomads range from 45 to 83 years and the age for female grey nomads range from 37 to 81 years.

### 5:4. Location of Usual Residence

The question about whether or not a grey nomad maintained a permanent fixed address or lived a totally peripatetic lifestyle was completed by 964 grey nomads. The majority of surveyed grey nomads stated that they maintained a permanent fixed address (n=875 or almost 90 per cent of the population). Ninety-four percent of those who maintained a permanent address owned their family home (n=823). Ninety of the grey nomads surveyed stated that they did not have a permanent residence and that their caravan or motor home was their primary residence. This number accounted for 9.3 per cent of the surveyed population. As these individuals had no permanent address they were not included in this sub-section of the study. In addition, this study identified a small number of grey nomads from New Zealand, although they were

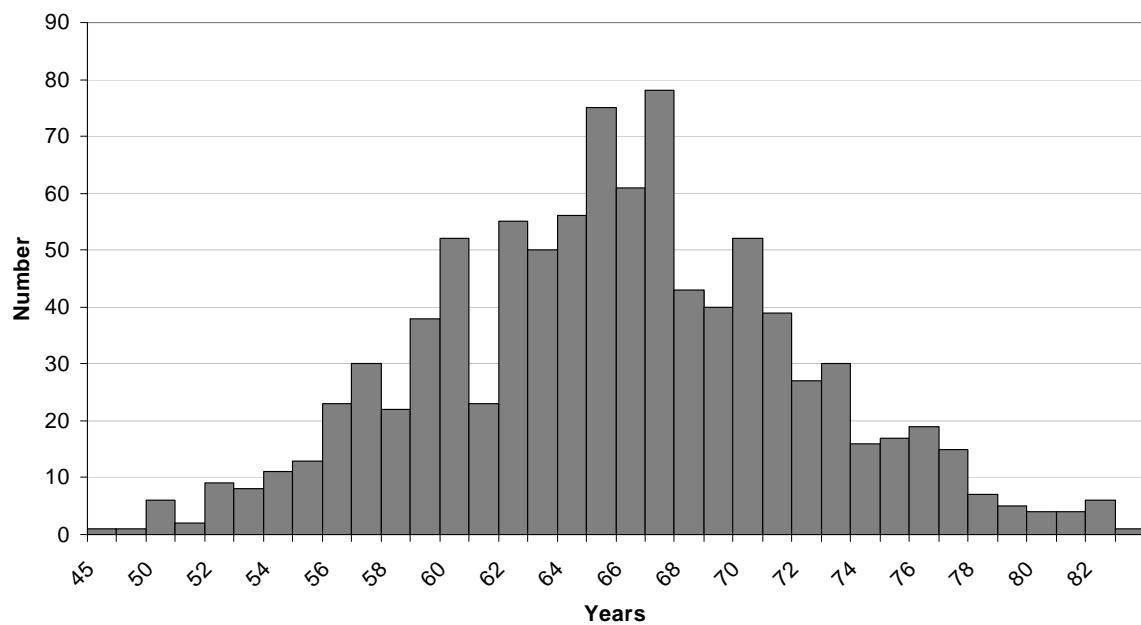


Figure 5.1. The age distribution of all male grey nomads surveyed per vehicle (n=881)

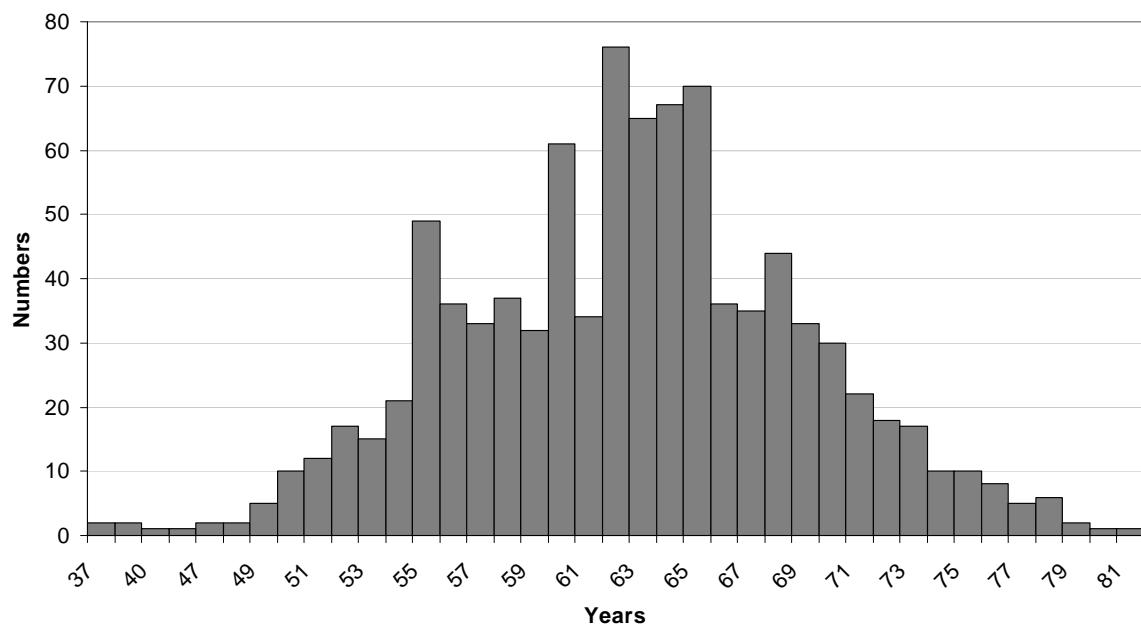
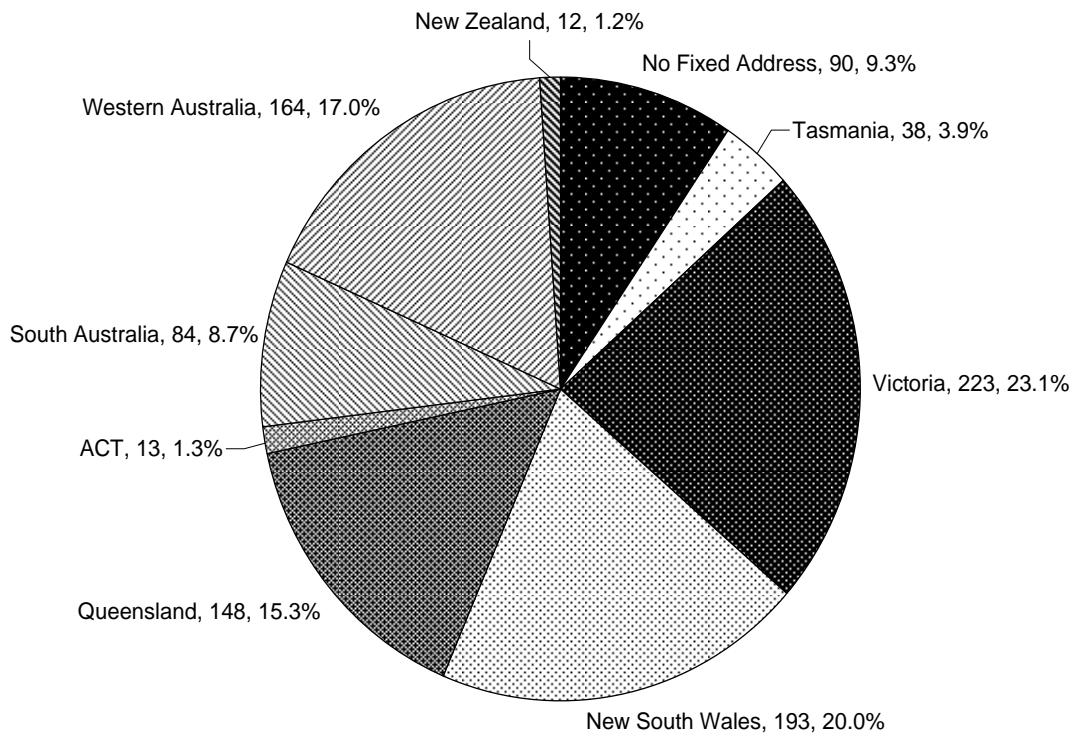


Figure 5.2. The age distribution of all female grey nomads surveyed per vehicle (n=879)

not included in any statistical analyses. However, their numbers, albeit small, were equivalent in size to the number of grey nomads from the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Analysis into Trans-Tasman winter movement requires further examination.

The majority of grey nomads surveyed in this study originated from Victoria, New South Wales and South East Queensland (see Figure 5.3). This result was not surprising due to the high population density in this part of Australia. The majority of grey nomads surveyed came from either Victoria (21.8 per cent) or New South Wales (18.8 per cent). A further fourteen per cent of grey nomads surveyed came from Queensland (as mentioned earlier they mostly lived in the south east corner). A large proportion of the grey nomads surveyed (17 per cent) came from Western Australia. However, their distribution across the country was skewed, with most Western Australian grey nomads being surveyed in Western Australia only (this topic will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter). Approximately nine per cent of the grey nomads surveyed came from South Australia. The sample population of surveyed grey nomads from Tasmania (3.9 per cent) and the ACT (1.3 per cent) was small but representative in relation to the size of their ageing population. Furthermore, in the case of Tasmanian grey nomads, the additional cost of ferrying their vehicles across Bass Strait does not appear to be a major hindrance to their travel. No grey nomads from the Northern Territory were surveyed.

Oryx and Leonard (2005) identified that approximately a third of the grey nomads came from capital cities, another third from large urban areas and the remaining third from small rural or coastal locations. Results from this study identified a similar trend with most grey nomads surveyed having their permanent fixed address in either a large urban area or in a capital city (see Figure 5.4). Results presented here represent the response, per travel party, to the question on the questionnaire regarding the location of their place of residence. Approximately 30 per cent of surveyed grey nomads have a permanent address in suburban areas of Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. Few surveyed grey nomads originated from the capital cities of Canberra and Hobart (less than five) and no grey nomads had a permanent residence in Darwin. A high number (five or more) of the surveyed grey nomads had a permanent address in twelve large urban centres,



*Figure 5.3. The numbers and proportion of grey nomads surveyed in northern Australia categorised according to their state of residence.*

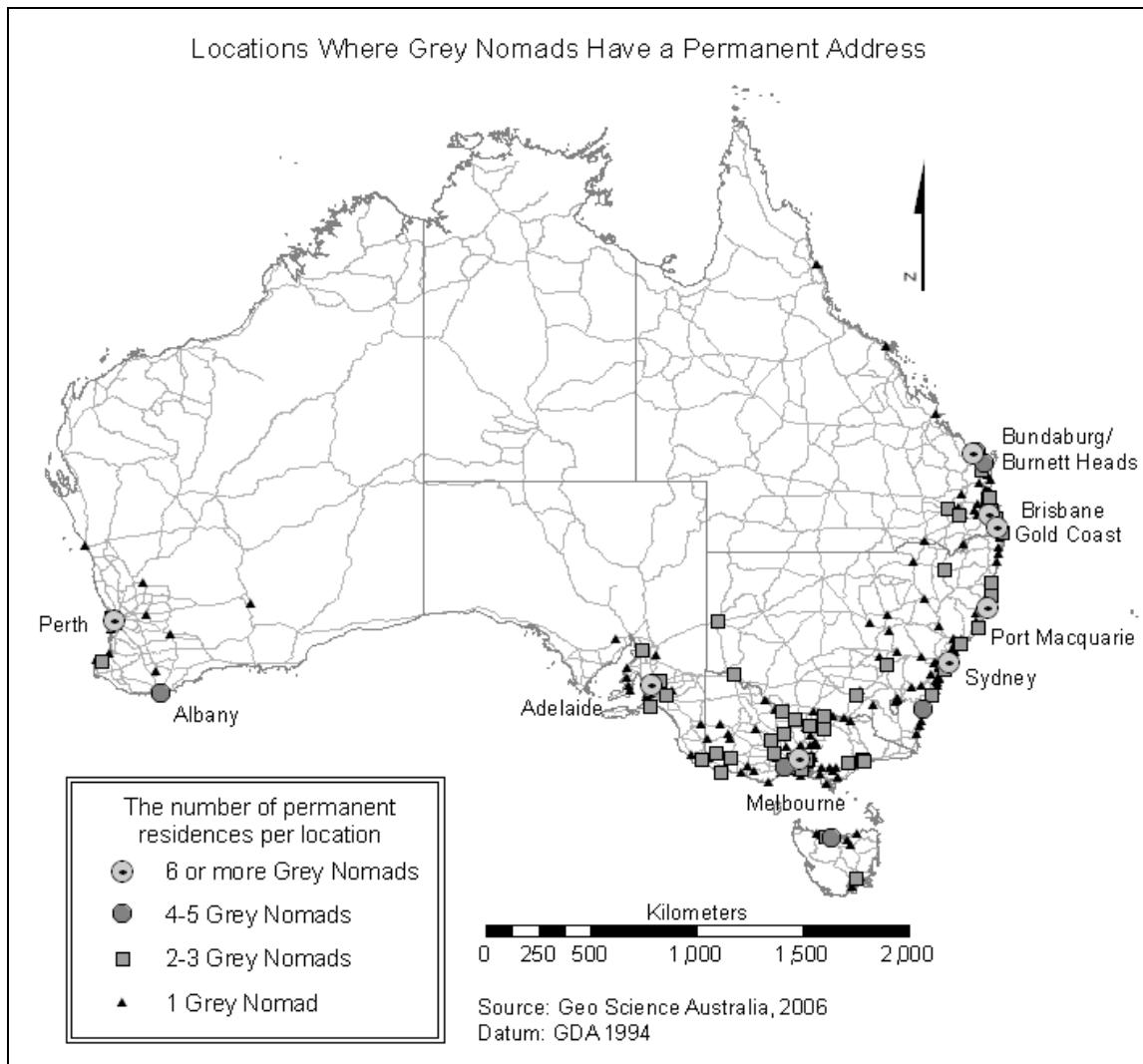


Figure 5.4. The locations where grey nomads (per travel party) maintained a permanent residential address ( $n=875$ ).

all situated on or near the coast. These locations are: Willetton, Mandurah, Yunderup and Busselton in Western Australia; Hervey Bay, Gold Coast, Bundaberg and Bargara in Queensland; Port Macquarie and Batesman Bay in New South Wales; Geelong in Victoria; Devonport in Tasmania; and Victor Harbour in South Australia. They are noted sea change/retirement locations for Australia's' ageing population (Burnely and Murphy, 2004). While the majority of locations where grey nomads maintain a permanent address are clustered along the coastal fringes, their distribution inland is generally scattered. Approximately 120 of the grey nomads surveyed (or almost thirteen per cent) originated from locations across inland Australia (i.e. not locations situated on the coast). Most of these grey nomads were from single locations, although some large inland centres like Mildura, Albury, Wagga Wagga, Drysdale, Collie, Inverell and Sale had a moderate representation (three-four permanent addresses) within the sample. Only three towns or cities above the Tropic of Capricorn - all located along the Queensland coast - were identified as places where grey nomads had a permanent fixed address.

Almost 43 per cent of the grey nomads surveyed had changed their permanent address within the last ten years. Approximately a quarter (24.6 per cent) of the grey nomads surveyed had moved residential address in the last five years. Data from the 2006 Census indicated that grey nomads may not be any more mobile in their permanent movements than mainstream retired Australians. Data from the ABS 2006 Census (2007d) reported that over 70 per cent of Australians aged 55 years or older had lived at the same address for at least five years. This result may suggest that seasonal movement may counter a desire to make a permanent move, as the percentage of grey nomads that have changed their permanent address is lower than the ABS data indicates. Nevertheless, the results from this study showed that a high number of grey nomads had a permanent address in areas renowned as retirement destinations such as Hervey/Wide Bay area, Port Macquarie, Geelong, Victor Harbour and Busselton. However, a grey nomad's average length of occupancy at their permanent address was 18.5 years (median=14 years). The number of years for occupancy ranged from 'just moved that year' (n=2) to 77 years (n=1). The most frequent response was three years (n=57). Therefore, this data is skewed more toward recent migration rather than long occupancy. The improvements to road and

communication networks and the fragmentation of the family unit since the 1980s (i.e. young adults moving to a distant location from the family home for employment) has seen what Sullivan (1985) called the ‘ties’ to a single location loosen. The loosening of these ties to a location can produce an environment conducive to frequent movements, both temporary and permanent. In addition, McHugh (1990) suggested that some seasonal movement amongst North American snowbirds was a precursor to a permanent move. Only two per cent of grey nomads surveyed stated that they were searching or considering making a permanent retirement move in the near future. Thus, most grey nomads usually make a permanent move prior to becoming a grey nomad, providing them with a stable home base from which they can plan and organise their circular movements, and store equipment and vehicles (including caravan or motor home).

### **5:5. Type of Pre-Retirement Employment**

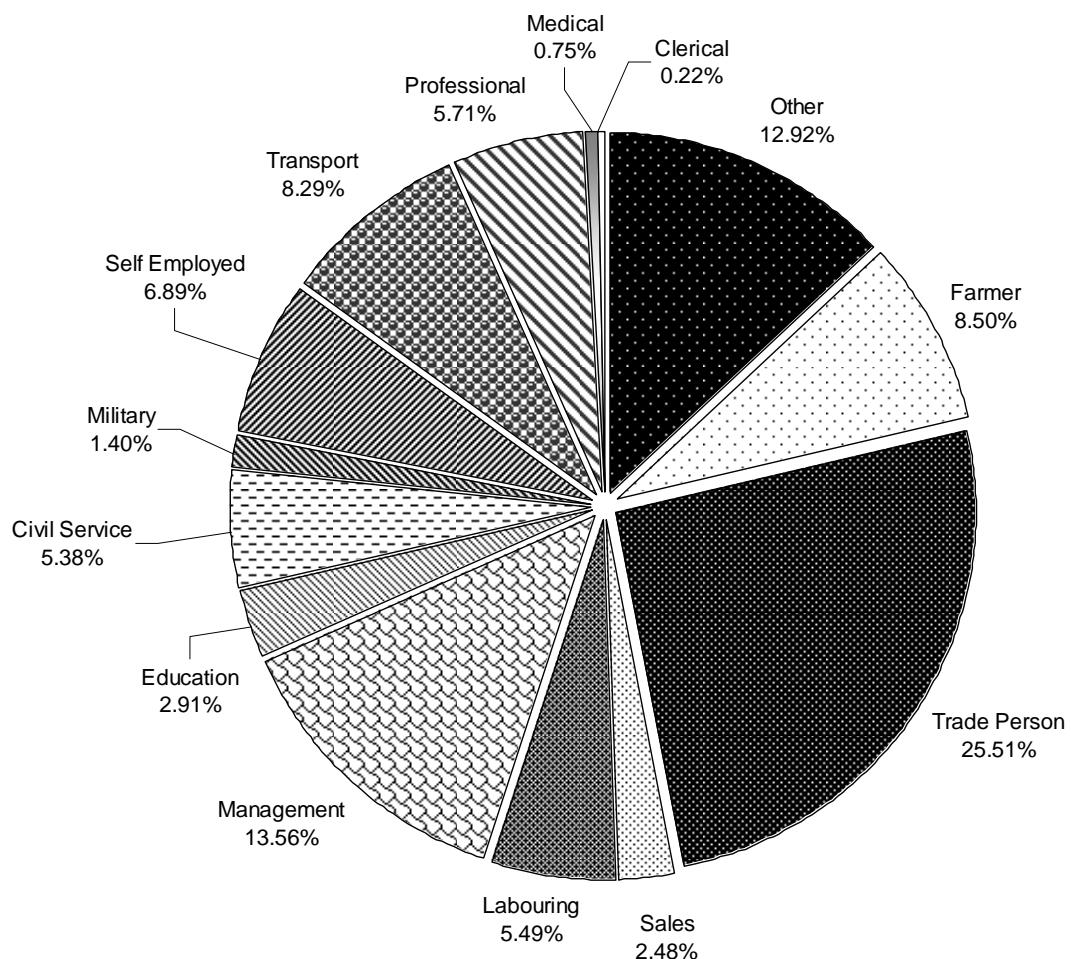
Pollard (1996), Mings (1997), Greiner *et al.* (2003), and Oryx and Leonard (2005) concluded that grey nomads are a mixture of blue (i.e. trades persons) and white (i.e. office and management) collar workers. This study did not identify the employment history of grey nomads, but examined their last type of occupation prior to retirement. In total, 923 male and 822 female grey nomads answered on the questionnaire as to their last type of permanent employment. The figures on male and female pre-retirement employment is presented not according to ABS employment categories, but is based upon a grey nomad’s perception of their employment status. The reason for using a grey nomad’s classification regarding their pre-retirement employment was due to the high number of respondents who stated tradespersons, salespersons or self employed as occupation and not what industry sector that were employed. Hence, classifying them into the correct ABS classification was problematic.

Results about the pre-retirement employment of grey nomads in this study were similar to those found in other research into grey nomads. Male grey nomads surveyed in this study were mainly engaged in the trades (e.g. plumber, carpenter,

mechanic, boiler maker) or in middle management positions prior to retirement. The majority of female grey nomads were engaged in domestic household duties or were employed in clerical or manual labouring positions (e.g. process working, packing, sales assistants) before retiring. Whilst grey nomads surveyed represent the full range of income earners (i.e. high to low incomes), the majority of grey nomads surveyed were middle income earners during their employment years. Mings (1997) concluded that the primary source of income within a grey nomad's household was generated by the male. Since female grey nomads were generally employed in home duties or in low income employment (e.g. labouring positions and sales), their income mainly supplemented the household budget.

As mentioned previously, the majority of male grey nomads surveyed were employed as trades people (25.5 per cent) or in management positions (13.6 per cent) (see Figure 5.5). The 'other' classification (12.9 per cent) included occupations such as auctioneers, musicians, merchant sailor, marine pilot, newspaper editor, clergymen and photographer. Surveyed male grey nomads were also employed prior to retirement in the transport industry (8.3 per cent), in farming (8.5 per cent), as self employed venders (6.9 per cent), professionals (6.9 per cent) and in labouring positions (5.5 per cent). Only a few male grey nomads surveyed had pre-retirement employment in clerical positions (2.2 per cent), in sales (2.5 per cent), as educators (2.9 per cent), in health care (0.8 per cent) and in the armed forces (1.4 per cent). The average weekly income for most of these types of employment ranged from below average to high.

Findings regarding the types of occupations female grey nomads were employed in prior to retirement returned similar results to Mings' (1997) study. The pre-retirement employment of the female grey nomads surveyed differed notably from male employment. The majority of female grey nomads (23.9 per cent) were employed in home duties (see Figure 5.6). This result is not surprising as many grey nomads lived in an era when single income families were the norm, with males dominating the workforce. Other areas where female grey nomads found moderately high levels of employment included clerical duties (15.5 per cent) and the 'other' classification (11.1 per cent), which included musicians, reporters and pilots.



*Figure 5.5. The types of pre-retirement occupation of the surveyed male grey nomads.  
(n=923)*

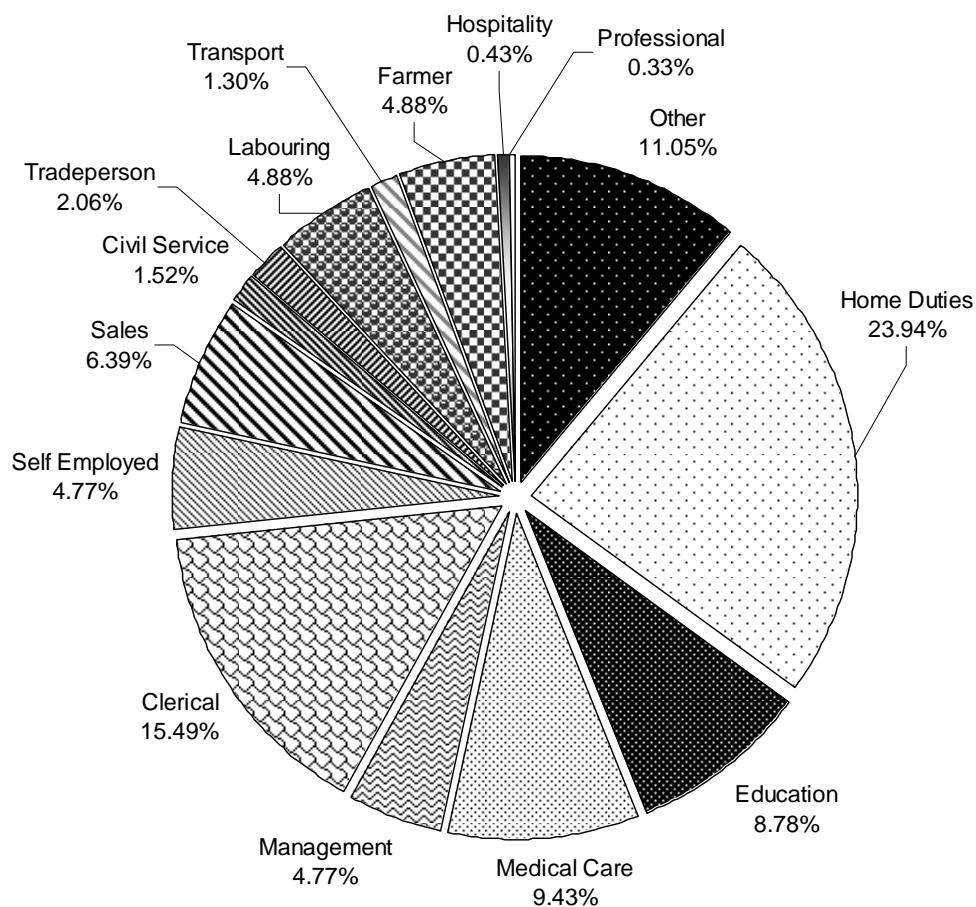


Figure 5.6. The types of pre-retirement occupation of the surveyed female grey nomads. (n=822)

Compared to male grey nomads, female grey nomads found higher levels of employment in the fields of education (8.8 per cent), sales (6.4 per cent) and medicine (9.4 per cent). However, management (4.8 per cent), transport (1.3 per cent), trades people (2.1 per cent), professional (0.3 per cent) and civil services (i.e. fire brigade, ambulance and police – 1.5 per cent) all had considerably lower levels of female grey nomad employment compared to males. This result is not surprising as these positions were traditionally male-dominated roles when the grey nomads entered into employment. Hence, as Mings (1997) concluded, the majority of female grey nomads were employed in occupations that excluded them from earning high incomes and their income helped supplement the household budget.

## **5:6. Retirement**

Most grey nomads surveyed had taken early retirement. On average, surveyed male grey nomads had been retired for 7.2 years (n=907) (median: five years). Female grey nomads - excluding those female grey nomads who stated home duties as their main type of employment - had been retired 5.7 years (n=768) (median: three years). Per vehicle, the average length of retirement of the grey nomads surveyed was 7.6 years (median: six years). Since the average age of a male grey nomad surveyed was 65.4 years and females 62.6 years, this result suggests that most grey nomads retire between 59 and 61 years of age. Being able to afford retirement prior to reaching 65 years for male and 62.5 years for women (ages for obtaining a pension) may indicate that the majority of grey nomads were financially secure. Figure 5.7 shows the range of years, per vehicle, that the surveyed grey nomads (excluding female grey nomads who were employed in home duties) have been retired.

Sixteen of the female grey nomads surveyed stated they were semi-retired and six female grey nomads were on long service leave. Twenty-two per cent of the female grey nomads (n=174) stated that they were not retired. Hence, many female grey nomads consider that their ‘job is never done’; they still must maintain their family home, either on the road or at their permanent address. Fifteen of the surveyed male grey nomads were semi-retired and another five were on long service leave. Information obtained during field interviews suggested that the majority of semi-

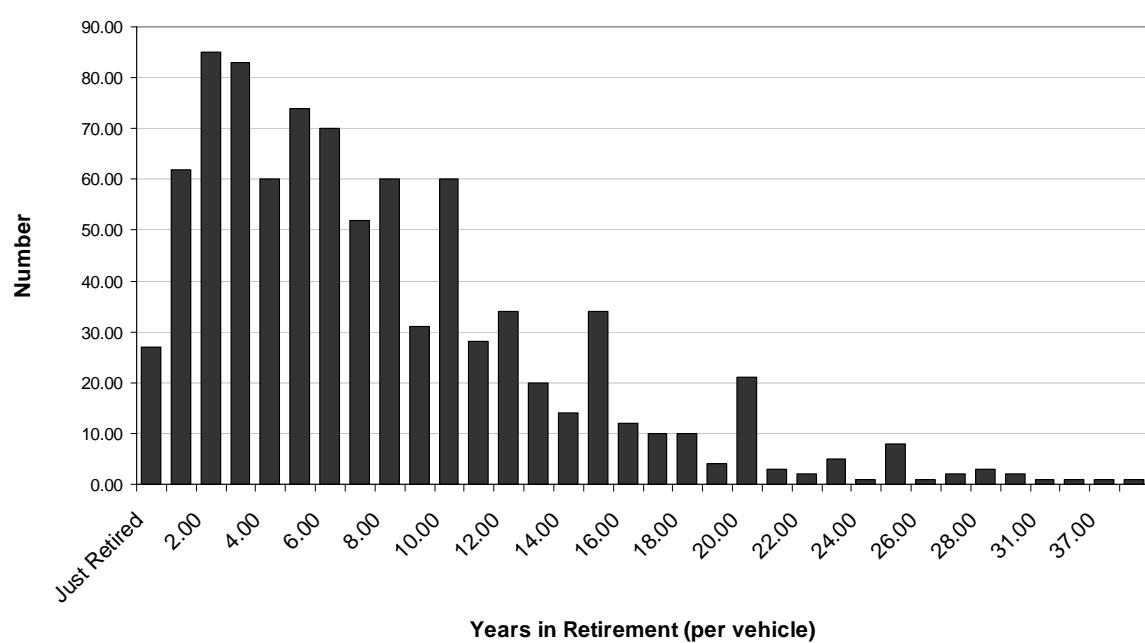


Figure 5.7. Years in retirement (per vehicle) for the surveyed grey nomads (excluding female grey nomads who stated their employment as home duties; n=962).

retired grey nomads seek employment whilst they are travelling, with the type of employment ranging from seasonal fruit picking to caretaking in caravan parks. These grey nomads tended to have no fixed address and were living a nomadic lifestyle. However, many grey nomads during discussions prior to the distribution of the questionnaire stated that they or their partner sought seasonal employment whilst away, although they were retired. Hence, the number of grey nomads in seasonal employment may be higher than stated in this study.

## 5:7. Type of Retirement Funding

The type of retirement funding a grey nomad received was recorded in 958 completed questionnaires. Forty-two per cent (n=430) of the grey nomads surveyed were self-funded retirees. This figure did not include the less than one per cent (n=6) of the grey nomads who stated they were on long service leave. Over 36 per cent (n=370) of the grey nomads surveyed were on a full government pension scheme and approximately fifteen per cent (n=152) stated they were on a part pension. However, a grey nomad's financial retirement scheme was not a true reflection of their yearly income. Even though the government pension was means tested, many grey nomads minimise their income in order to obtain government benefits. Purchases of a car and caravan, in addition to the expense of travelling for multiple months, were ways of limiting savings to remain under the threshold for the means test. This spending of money was highlighted in these grey nomad's comments:

*'Our savings were too high, so we got rid of the old car and bought a new one, but this time we bought the Platinum [reference to the top of the range model]' (Grey nomad, No. 23)*

*'Both my wife and I have a large box of rattles [reference to their medication] and we need the Health Care Card to save us money.....Drugs are just too expensive these days and it is important that we keep [our income] under the pension threshold so we can get our scripts cheap'. (Grey nomad, No. 4)*

During field interviews, other grey nomads echoed similar comments regarding measures to reduce their annual income. The high cost of travelling, including the purchase of motor homes, caravans and towing vehicles, can help

reduce a retiree's income. The strategy of going on an extended winter trip as a means of staying below the threshold of income to avoid losing the pension requires further analysis. If pension thresholds are raised or decreased, this may impact on the level of expenditure certain grey nomads may be willing to spend during their trips.

### **5:8. Level of Education Achieved**

The level of formal education achieved by 925 female grey nomads and 934 male grey nomads was recorded in 954 questionnaires. Only 25 per cent of the male and 22 percent of the female grey nomads surveyed did not complete any type of formal education (see Table 5.2). The majority of the grey nomads surveyed achieved either a high school or TAFE/College education (Male: 65 per cent; Female: 70 per cent). Less than ten per cent of the grey nomads had completed a university education (Males: 9 percent; Female: 8 per cent). Overall, the majority of the grey nomads had achieved some level of formal education. A grey nomad's level of education prior to retirement, especially amongst the male grey nomads surveyed, reflected their type of employment before retiring (i.e. the high number of TAFE/College education males and trade people, the small number of professionals and university educated grey nomads). In addition, there was very little difference in relation to age and the leave of education achieved. The notable difference reported in a cross tabulation analysis on age and the level of education achieves reported that there were few grey nomads under the age of 60 years that did not completed any formal education (ASR =-3.0: when the ASR is “greater than 1.96 or less than -1.96, there is a less than .05 probability of it occurring by chance, and it is considered to be significant”; Nishimura, Waryszak and King, 2007: 280).

*Table 5.2. The levels of education achieved by grey nomads.*

<b>Education</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Did not finish School	237	25.4	205	22.2
High School Certificate	382	40.9	480	51.9
TAFE/College	227	24.3	166	17.9
University	88	9.4	74	8.0
Total	934	100.0	925	100.0

### 5:9. A Grey Nomad's State of Health

Apart from Onyx and Leonard (2007) and a small scoping study undertaken by Mein, Freeman and Maguire (2006), little research has investigated the state of health amongst grey nomads. These studies have concluded that the health status among grey nomads is relatively good. Mein, Freeman and Maguire (2006) concluded that approximately 62 per cent of grey nomads were on some permanent form of medication. However, grey nomad health has never been actually examined in any depth. Questions pertaining to a grey nomad's health in this project were only asked in the 2006 survey as a means for obtaining additional funding for the project. In total, 432 out of the 453 questionnaires returned contained information regarding the health of 859 grey nomads.

Goldney and Fisher (2005) examined the aged population in South Australia and concluded that just over 75 per cent of people aged between 55 years and 64 years were taking some type of permanent medication. For those aged 65 years and over, only twelve per cent were not on any type of permanent medication. Grey nomads, as a sub-group of Australia's senior population, may suffer from the same aged-related ailments as Australia's mainstream elderly. These ailments include osteoporosis, arthritis, heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure and high cholesterol (see Figure 5.8). Results in this study identified that Australia's grey nomads may be slightly more healthier than Australia's main stream aged population as the majority do suffer from the some type of medical condition. The instance of grey nomads who reported suffering from high blood pressure, for example, was 27.2 per cent compared to almost 40 per cent of mainstream retirees in Australia. In addition, conditions like arthritis (18 per cent) and diabetes (8 per cent) were also lower amongst the grey nomads surveyed compared to Australia's mainstream retired population (49 per cent and 14 per cent respectively; ABS, 2006r). Age does not appear to be a major factor in determining a grey nomad's health. The only ailments which had a significant difference in accordance with age (i.e. grey nomads aged 50-64 years and 65 years +) was unspecified respiratory disorders in males ( $\chi^2 = 19.013$ ,  $df=9$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.025$ , Cramer  $V=.126$ ) Most of these ailments, however, were managed through the use of regular medication and monitoring and does not inhibit a grey

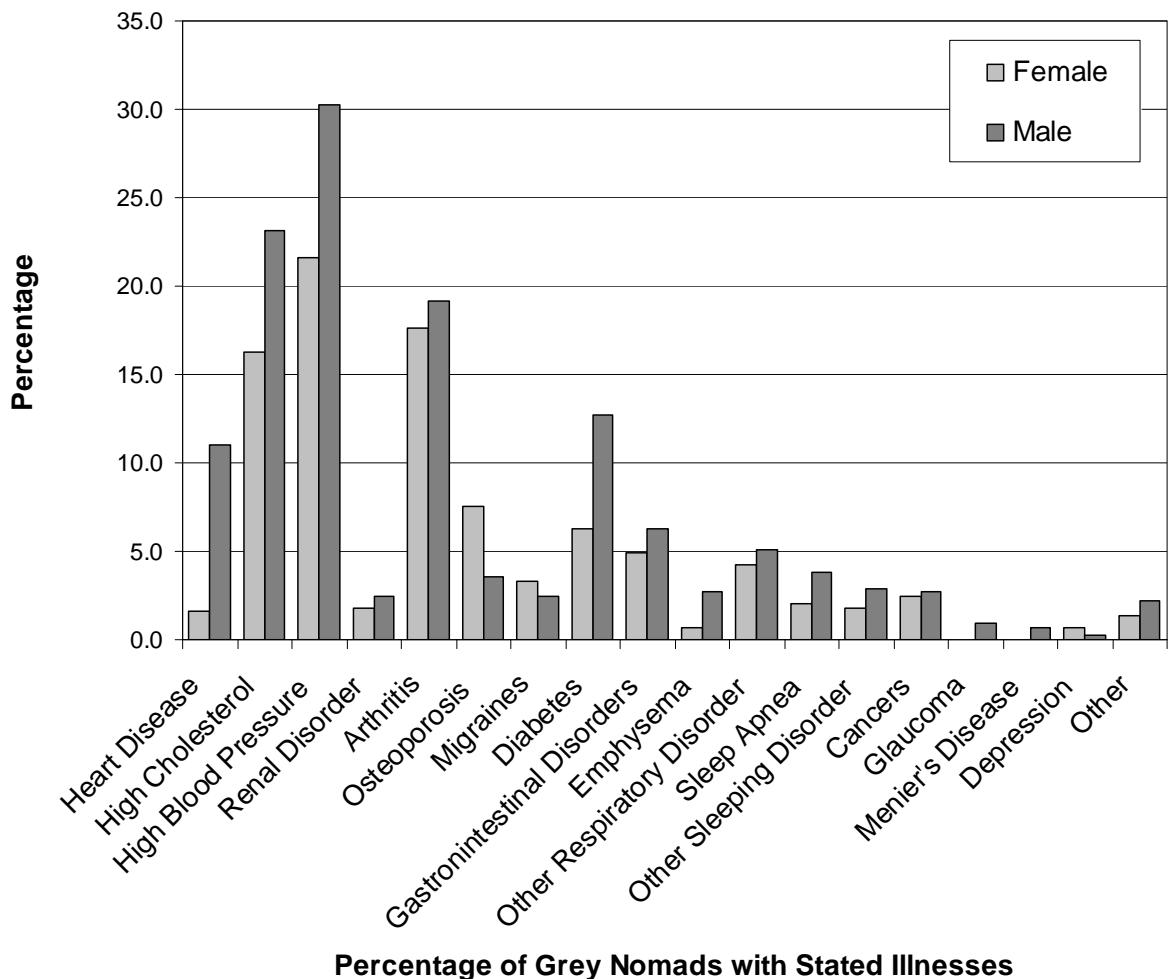


Figure 5.8. The proportion of medical conditions suffered by grey nomads. (n=859)

nomad's desire or ability to undertake extended journeys.

Results from this study identified that the male grey nomads surveyed tended to have more medical ailments than females. This result is similar to the findings from Onyx's and Leonard's (2007) study. Female grey nomads, however, had higher incidences of osteoporosis and depression compared to their male counterparts. Five per cent of the returned questionnaires did not state if the respondents had any particular medical condition (n=21). This result was not to say that these grey nomads have no medical ailments; it only means that no conditions were stated. Approximately 75 per cent (n=652) of the grey nomads surveyed had two or more ailments, while 16 per cent (n=136) stated they had more than three conditions. Hence, 25 per cent (n=207) of respondents had only one medical condition that required constant medication or treatment. Further examination of the medical status of grey nomads is required to ascertain their impact on the medical facilities at the isolated destinations they visit during their travels.

Comments obtained from grey nomads during field interviews suggested that many consider that the active lifestyle associated with travel is keeping them young and healthy. This view was found amongst the grey nomads interviewed during the studies by Onyx and Leonard (2007) and Onyx *et. al.* (2007). For a few, life on the road is keeping them alive and improving their quality of life. From the short semi-structured interviews conducted prior to the distribution of the questionnaire, three grey nomads stated that they were suffering from terminal cancer. In all three cases, they were given six to twelve months to live. Rather than wait for the predicted outcome, all decided to spend what time they had left travelling. One grey nomad is now into his third year of remission and the other two are into their second year of remission. All stated that living an active lifestyle and "*being constantly on the go*" (Grey nomad, questionnaire No. A157) has kept them alive. In addition, one elderly couple, both diabetic, considered not undertaking anymore extended winter journeys to northern Australia. However, after advice from their family doctor they changed their minds. Their doctor suggested that these trips enhanced their quality of life and may be contributing to their longevity. Furthermore, grey nomads suffering arthritis also take extended winter trips to northern Australia. Spending the winter in a warmer climate of northern Australia helps ease their pain and discomfort. A common

response on the questionnaires relating to the advice given to grey nomads by their family doctor regarding health and travel was to “*take your medicine and enjoy yourselves*” (Grey nomad, questionnaire No. A261). No grey nomads stated during interviews or on the questionnaire that their family doctor did not recommend that they take this type of trip.

## 5:10. Expenditure Patterns

The question on the questionnaire relating to expenditure asked, “how much money did you spend yesterday?” This question was asked to help classify grey nomads in sub-groups, as some groups of grey nomads may have different levels of daily expenditure. The figures presented here indicate the expenditure of grey nomads per vehicle. Nine hundred and forty-nine questionnaires distributed to grey nomads completed this question. The average daily expenditure per vehicle was \$120.50 per day (median=\$100.00). Expenditure ranged from zero dollars to \$2000.00 (booking for a tour to Cape York Peninsula). Data from the National Visitor Survey conducted by Tourism Research Australia (2006) had average daily domestic holiday expenditure at approximately \$170.00. This figure included all types of domestic overnight holidays. Thus, grey nomads appear to have a lower than average daily expenditure than other domestic tourists. Yet, a grey nomad’s expenditure pattern will generally have a wider geographical distribution and span a longer duration of time than the average Australian domestic holiday maker. With the average length of a grey nomad’s trip being approximately 126 days, the average cost of taking an extended winter journey can be in the vicinity of \$15 000, assuming that a grey nomad’s daily expenditure remains constant throughout their trip. However, this figure will vary depending on the type of grey nomad, the destinations visited, the activities undertaken, the length of stay at destinations and the length of trip. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that the cost of a grey nomad’s trip can constitute a large financial outlay, most of which is spent in regional Australia. Furthermore, this figure does not include the cost associated with preparing for taking a trip like vehicle maintenance, so the cost of taking a trip may actually be higher.

## **5:11. Are Grey Nomads a Homogenous Population?**

The first part of this chapter examined the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of grey nomads as an entire population. Most studies regarding grey nomads have highlighted differences, but treated them as a homogenous population. In addition, most studies have examined grey nomads within the confines of a caravan park, except Onyx and Leonard (2005), who studied grey nomads not residing in caravan parks. Furthermore, Mings (1997) concluded that grey nomads are very independent. Grey nomads are individuals, with individual choice and requirements, and all have different circumstances that influence their decision on travel. Hence, it would be fair to assume that grey nomads are not a homogenous population and that differences exist in the mobility, attitudes and socio-economic/demographic characteristics within the population. This section will discuss variations in some socio-economic/demographic characteristics mentioned in earlier parts of this chapter. These characteristics were tested against their choice of accommodation (i.e. caravan park or camping) and types of destinations (e.g. large and small coastal towns or cities; large and small inland towns or cities; towns or cities heavily dependent upon tourism; camping areas). Identifying differences in the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of grey nomads in these following sub-sections is important for developing insights into possible sub-groups of grey nomads.

### **5:11.1. Camping versus Caravan Parks**

One question in the questionnaire examined the proportion of time a grey nomad resided in or intended to stay in either a caravan park or a camping area throughout the duration of their trip. A Spearman's Correlation comparing the response to the frequency in which a camping grey nomads will seek out a camping destination and grey nomads residing in caravan parks will stay in caravan parks resulted in a coefficient of -.933 with a P-value=<.001. This result suggested that those grey nomads, who stay in caravan parks, preferred this form of accommodation over camping areas. Hence, grey nomads who stay in caravan parks will generally seek out caravan park accommodation and will rarely camp, and vice versa. Moreover, those grey nomads who camp will tend to favour camping and will rarely

stay in caravan parks. This difference indicates that there are at least two sub-groups within the grey nomad population: those who never stay in caravan parks and those who never camp.

### **5:11.2. Differences in Age and Destination Choice**

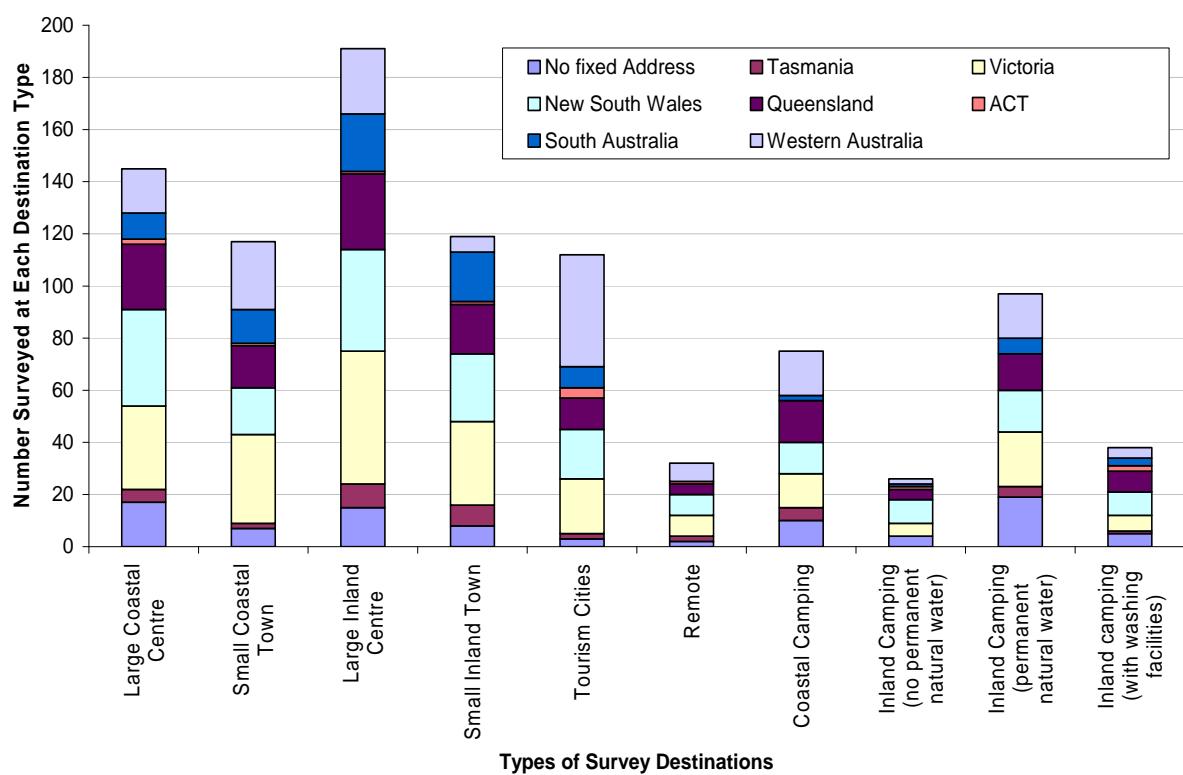
Age does not influence a grey nomad's preference for caravan parks or camping types of accommodation (Mann Whitney test:  $U=97210.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.495$ ). This outcome could be influenced by the varying ages at which a grey nomad may retire (mobility and age will be examined in the following chapter). In addition, a Chi-square test on age groups and different types of destinations surveyed also reported no statistical significant difference ( $\chi^2=37.827$ ,  $df=27$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.081$ , Cramer  $V=.120$ ). The only notable difference was that grey nomads over the age of 70 years tended not to reside in camping areas that had washing facilities preferring to stay in caravan parks. Any camping locations that grey nomads aged over 70 years resided were generally used as a stop-over location. The ASR test showed a -2.7 result for grey nomads over 70 years of age and that type of destination (ASR counts above 1.96 and below -1.96 are considered significant; Nishimura, *et. al.*, 2007). However, surveys taken at Boulia and Mareeba, destinations which fit these type of destinations classification, may be biasing results for this type of destination. Boulia and Mareeba were surveyed when major regional events (e.g. Boulia Camel Races and Mareeba's Christmas in July) were either about to commence or were underway. These events are known to attract grey nomads in large numbers (possibly the younger more active grey nomad). Mareeba's Christmas in July is also an annual meeting location for members of the Campervan and Motor Homes Association, with members arriving up to a month in advance. These factors may account for the increased number of the younger aged grey nomads and a decline in older grey nomads, who wish to avoid crowds at these destinations.

### **5:11.3. Difference in Age and Types of Retirement Funding**

A significant statistical difference existed between the age of a grey nomad and the likelihood that they received a government pension or were self-funded retirees (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=62773.000$ ,  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ ). Furthermore, a significant statistical difference existed between the age of the surveyed grey nomads on a part-pension and those who were self-funded retirees (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=24942.000$ ,  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ ). The older surveyed grey nomads were more likely to be receiving some form of government pension. No statistical difference existed between the ages of those surveyed grey nomads receiving either a full or part pension (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=27568.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.761$ ).

### **5:11.4. Place of Usual Residence**

A chi-square test identified a significant difference between the states where grey nomads maintain a permanent address and the type of winter destinations visited ( $\chi^2 = 151.714$ ,  $df=27$ ,  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ , Cramer V=.140). Grey nomads from Western Australia favoured cities/towns relying on tourism (38.4 per cent; ASR = 5.5) in higher proportions than grey nomads from the eastern states (see Figure 5.9 and Appendix E) and avoid small inland towns where possible. These figures were somewhat lower in comparison to grey nomads from Victoria (tourist cities/towns, 19 per cent), New South Wales (tourist cities/towns, 17 per cent) and Queensland (tourist cities/towns, 11 per cent). This difference probably exists because most destinations in northern Western Australia, especially those situated along the coast, are widely dispersed, and are either associated with mining (e.g. Port Hedland) or tourism (e.g. Exmouth and Broome). The distribution of destinations along the northern Western Australian coastline compared to the east coast drives many grey nomads to tourism-orientated destinations like Broome and Exmouth, rather than mining centres. In contrast, grey nomads who have no fix address tended to avoid destinations that are typified as a highly reliant on tourism (ASR = -2.3) and favour camping destinations situated near natural permanent water (ASR = 3.3; see Appendix E).



*Figure 5.9. The states and territories where grey nomads have their permanent residence and the type of destination where they were surveyed.*

### **5:11.5. Employment and Destinations**

Types of occupation prior to retirement does not statistically influence whether a grey nomad will camp or stay in a caravan park (Chi-square: Male  $\chi^2 = 17.419$ , df=13, P-value=.181, Cramer V=.137; Female  $\chi^2 = 12.559$ , df=14, P- value=.561, Cramer V=.117). However, when a cross tabulation was performed on male pre-retirement employment in relation to where they were residing at the time of survey (i.e. caravan park or a camping area), certain types of employment background seem to favour a particular type of accommodation. Male grey nomads who were employed in management and professional positions had a higher tendency to reside in caravan parks than in camping areas (see Figure 5.10). The ARS results for male grey nomads surveyed who were managers and professionals were, -2.0 and -2.1 respectively, suggesting that these grey nomads prefer not to reside in camping type destinations. Furthermore, male grey nomads employed in labouring, the trades, farming, in the transport industry or self-employed grey nomads tended to free camp rather than reside in caravan parks. However, the ASR showed no significant difference in preference labouring (camping (C) = 1.2, caravan parks (CP) = .7); the trades (C = .5, CP = -.3), farming (C= .7, CP = -.5), transport industry (C =1.3, CP = -.8) and self-employed (C = .6, CP = -.4). These results may indicate not so much the type of employment but the level of a grey nomad's retirement income and the types of service provided at a destination. The surveyed grey nomads employed in professional and management positions may have a higher retirement income and be able to afford constant and lengthier stays at caravan parks. Moreover, the lack of services at camping sites may not attract this segment of the grey nomad population. The surveyed male grey nomads employed in the labouring, transport and trade industries may have lower retirement incomes compared to their colleagues who occupied managerial and professional positions. Camping out was one way of reducing their travel expenditure. The employment background of the surveyed female grey nomads had no influence of their decision to camp or reside in a caravan park.

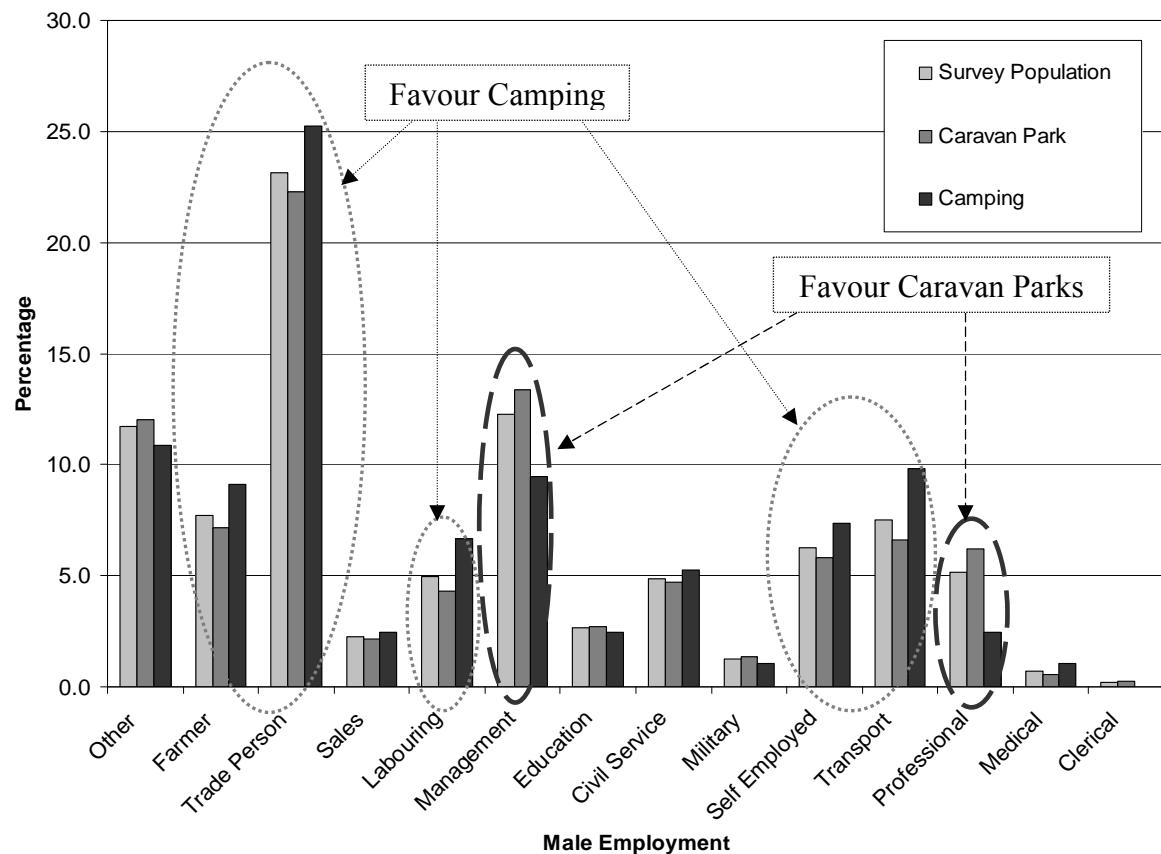


Figure 5.10. A comparison of the percentage of male grey nomads within each employment group who where camping or staying in caravan parks at the time of surveying.

### **5:11.6. Length of Retirement**

The actual length of time a grey nomad has been in retirement does not influence whether a grey nomad will favour a caravan park over a free camping area (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=78005.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.408$ ). However, a statistical difference existed (Kruskal-Wallis test:  $\chi^2=25.515$ ,  $df=9$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.001$ ) between the types of destinations surveyed and the length of time a grey nomad has been retired. Table 5.3 shows the results from the Mann-Whitney test identifying which destinations were significantly different for the length of time visiting grey nomads have been in retirement. The longer a grey nomad had been retired the more likely they resided in a coastal environment, regardless if the location was a large or small centre/town, a tourism function city (all tourism function cities surveyed were situated on the coast) or a camping location. Furthermore, a grey nomad who has been in retirement for six years or more will also tend to seek out small inland towns and inland camping destinations with permanent water sources (see Figure 5.11 a and b). Onyx and Leonard (2007) categorised grey nomads as ‘Ulyssean’: they wished to escape larger, highly visited commercial-orientated destinations and seek out new experiences. Interestingly, some of the grey nomads who were surveyed and had been retired for seven to fourteen years sought remote locations. This tendency to visit remote locations can be attributed to a desire to expand their travelling experiences and/or a willingness to see more of Australia before the frailties of age hinder future travel.

### **5:11.7. A Grey Nomad’s Retirement Pension Scheme and its Influence on Destination Choice**

A grey nomad’s retirement pension scheme is reflective of their preference for staying in a caravan park or at a camping ground (Chi-square test:  $\chi^2 = 25.682$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ , Cramer V=.164). An examination of the retirement pension scheme of grey nomads and the choice of accommodation indicated that those grey nomads on a full pension had a higher than expected count for camping ( $ASR = 4.5$ ). Grey nomads on a part pension had a higher than expected count for caravan parks ( $ASR = 3.8$ ). The expected and observed counts for self- funded grey nomads residing in both

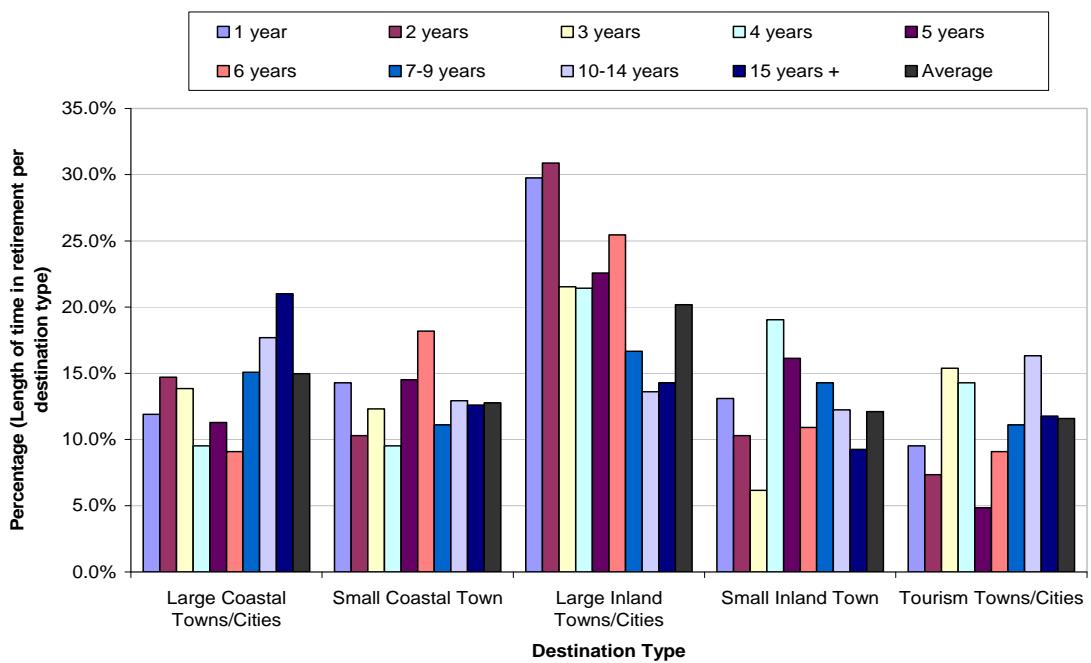
*Table 5.3. The results from the Mann-Whitney test on the length of a grey nomad's retirement and choice of destination. Only results that show significance are shown.*

Type of Destination	N	Mean Rank	SIG
Large Inland Cities/Towns	155	120.55	<.001
Large Coastal Cities/Towns	115	155.65	
Large Inland Cities/Towns	155	199.23	.032**
Small Coastal Town	98	139.23	
Large Inland Cities/Towns	155	98.21	<.001
Coastal Camping	61	134.65	
Large Inland Cities/Towns	155	122.16	.002
Tourist Cities/Towns	89	140.51	
Large Inland Cities/Towns	155	112.25	.036**
Inland Camping (permanent water)	82	131.77	
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Large Coastal Cities/Towns	115	77.73	.005
Inland Camping (facilities)*	30	54.87	
<hr/>			
Coastal Camping	61	89.70	.034**
Small Coastal Town	98	73.96	
Coastal Camping	61	87.94	.017**
Small Inland Town	93	70.65	
Coastal Camping	61	79.66	.004
Inland Camping (permanent water)	82	66.05	
Coastal Camping	61	52.15	.001
Inland Camping (facilities) *	30	33.50	
<hr/>			
Inland Camping (facilities) *	30	54.87	.005
Large Coastal Cities/Towns	115	77.73	
Inland Camping (facilities) *	30	47.00	.016**
Tourism Cities/Towns	89	64.38	

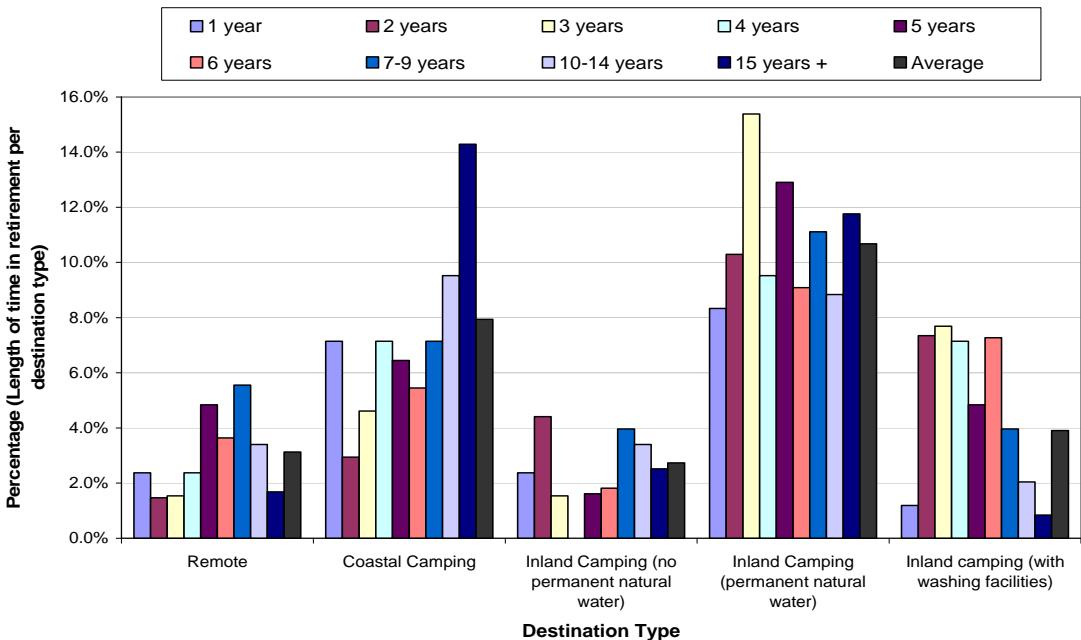
\*Inland camping area with facilities: facilities may include toilets, fresh water and or washing facilities such as showers.

Bonferroni adjustment = .005

\*\* Found not to be significant after the Bonferroni adjustment.



(a)



(b)

Figure 5.11 a and b. The length of a grey nomad's retirement in relation to their choice of destination. (a): Town and cities with caravan parks. (b): Different types of camping accommodation.

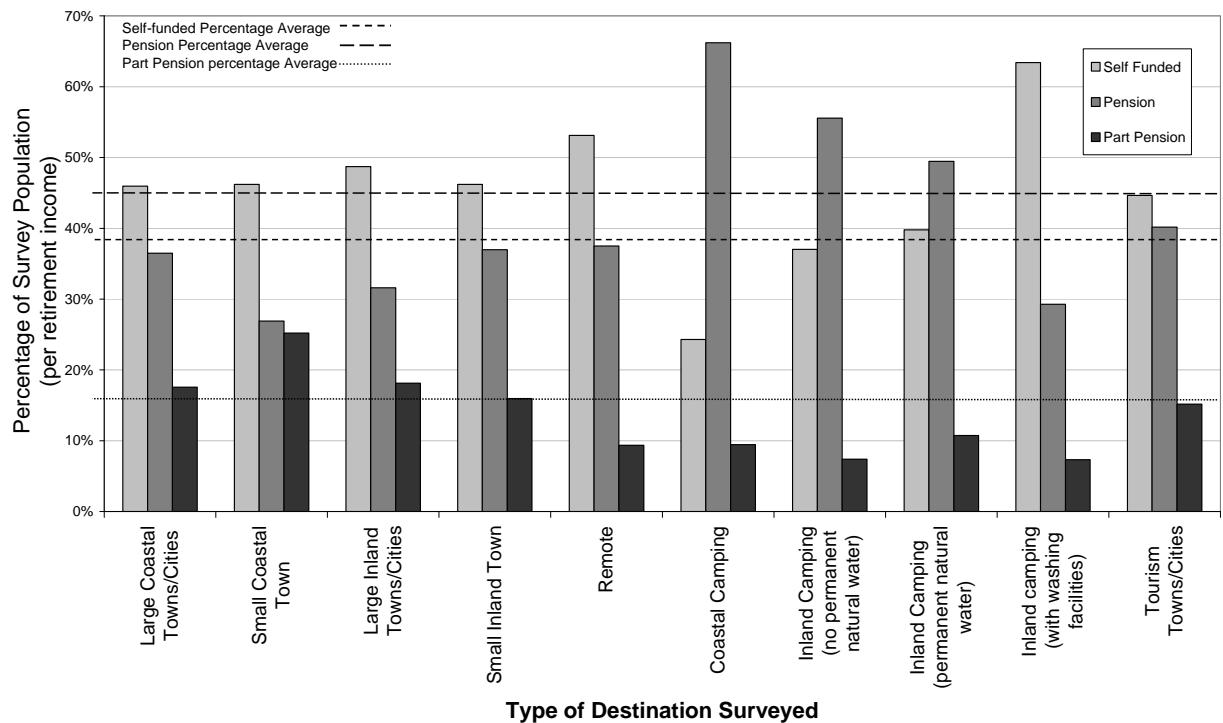
caravan parks and camping were similar (ASR: caravan parks =1.6, camping = -1.6). Hence, grey nomads on a full pension tended to favour camping areas over caravan park accommodation, whilst those on a part pension favoured caravan parks. This result regarding pensioners and camping is not surprising as residing in camping areas has notable cost saving benefits, which pensioners on a limited budget can utilise as a means of limiting their expenditure. In contrast, grey nomads who are self-funded or on a part pension are more financially secure and may not have the same budgetary constraints as grey nomads on a full pension. Due to the low sample size of (n=6), no analysis on grey nomads travelling on long service leave was conducted, although as they are primarily self-funded their preference should mimic other self-funded grey nomads.

A grey nomad's retirement pension scheme will influence their choice of destination during their trip (Chi-square test:  $\chi^2 = 62.686$ , df=27, P-value=<.001, Cramer V=.149). Examination of the adjusted standardised residual (ASR) on the chi-square test identified that grey nomads on a pension had a lower than expected count for small coastal towns (ASR=-2.7) and large inland centres (ASR=-2.1) (see Table 5.4). However, they had a larger than expected count for coastal camping destinations (ASR=5.0) and inland camping areas with permanent water (ASR=2.2). Self-funded grey nomads had a lower than expected count for coastal camping destinations (ASR=-3.8), but a higher than expected count for inland camping areas which had facilities (ASR=2.4). The grey nomads on a part-pension had a higher than expected count for small coastal towns (ASR=3.1). Figure 5.12 shows the proportion of grey nomads in relation to their type of retirement pension scheme and different types of destinations. The high proportion of grey nomads receiving a pension who were camping on the coast may be biased by the large number of grey nomads camping along the Gascoyne and Pilbara coastline in Western Australian. Interestingly, grey nomads who were self-funded retirees also had a higher propensity to seek out remote locations on their travels than grey nomads on a full pension. The high cost associated with travelling to remote locations may limit the desire for many grey nomads on a pension to visit remote destinations.

*Table 5.4. Cross-tabulation with an adjusted standardised residual on type of retirement pension scheme and types of destinations.*

Type of Destination	Type of Retiree's Funding			Total	
	Self Funded	Pension	Part Pension		
Large Coastal Cities/Towns	Count	68	54	26	148
	Expected Count	66.8	57.5	23.6	148.0
	Adjusted Residual	.2	-.6	.6	
Small Coastal Town	Count	55	32	30	117
	Expected Count	52.8	45.5	18.7	117.0
	Adjusted Residual	.4	-2.7*	3.1*	
Large Inland Cities/Towns	Count	94	61	35	190
	Expected Count	85.8	73.8	30.3	190.0
	Adjusted Residual	1.3	-2.1*	1.0	
Small Inland Town	Count	55	44	19	118
	Expected Count	53.3	45.9	18.8	118.0
	Adjusted Residual	.3	-.4	.0	
Tourism Cities/Towns	Count	50	45	17	112
	Expected Count	50.6	43.5	17.9	112.0
	Adjusted Residual	-.1	.3	-.2	
Remote	Count	17	12	3	32
	Expected Count	14.5	12.4	5.1	32.0
	Adjusted Residual	.9	-.2	-1.0	
Coastal Camping	Count	18	49	7	74
	Expected Count	33.4	28.8	11.8	74.0
	Adjusted Residual	-3.8*	5.0*	-1.6	
Inland Camping (no permanent natural water)	Count	10	15	2	27
	Expected Count	12.2	10.5	4.3	27.0
	Adjusted Residual	-.9	1.8	-1.2	
Inland Camping (permanent natural water)	Count	37	46	10	93
	Expected Count	42.0	36.1	14.8	93.0
	Adjusted Residual	-1.1	2.2*	-1.4	
Inland camping (with washing facilities)	Count	26	12	3	41
	Expected Count	18.5	15.9	6.5	41.0
	Adjusted Residual	2.4*	-.3	-1.5	
Total	Count	430	370	152	952
	Expected Count	430.0	370.0	152.0	952.0

\*Residuals over 1.96 or below -1.96 are considered significant (Nishimura, *et. al.*, 2007)



*Figure 5.12. The types of destinations a grey nomad visits in relation to their retirement pension scheme. The horizontal lines indicate the overall average for each retirement scheme. Types of retirement scheme with about average results have a high propensity to seek out that type of destination.*

### 5:11.8. Expenditure and its Influence on Destination Choice

The expenditure patterns amongst grey nomads varies considerably depending on their circumstances. A significant difference (Mann-Whitney:  $U=81114.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.002$ ) existed in the expenditure patterns amongst grey nomads camping compared to those staying in caravan parks (see Table 5.5). A significant difference (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=58595.000$ ,  $P\text{-value}<.001$ ) also existed between expenditure patterns for grey nomads travelling to a destination (in transit) and those at a destination. This information was obtained from the questionnaire (See Appendix B – questions 46-47 and Appendix C – questions 31-32) The mean daily expenditure for a grey nomad at a destination was \$106.57 (median=\$70.00), while travelling the figure was \$150.39 (median =\$130.00). Hence, travelling between destinations is more expensive than staying at a destination. Thus, some grey nomads may choose to stay at one destination for longer periods of time to save money. This difference in the cost of transiting between locations and the cost of staying longer at a destination was also noted for grey nomads who camped and those residing in caravan parks: camping (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=5306.000$ ,  $P\text{-value}<.001$ ) and those in caravan parks (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=27896.000$ ,  $P\text{-value}<.001$ ). The importance of establishing whether differences exist between the cost of travelling to a destination and the cost of having longer stays at a chosen destination may become significant, as rising fuel costs could force some grey nomads to alter their movement patterns as a means of reducing their travel expenditure.

The expenditure patterns amongst grey nomads surveyed who were staying in caravan parks was significantly different in relation to the different types of towns and cities they visited (Kruskal-Wallis test:  $\chi^2 =31.899$ ,  $df=9$ ,  $P\text{-value}<.001$ ). Grey nomads who prefer to stay in caravan parks in large inland centres (mean \$126.00; median \$100.00) and tourism cities (mean \$143.00; median \$100.00) generally have high rates of daily expenditure (see Table 5.6). This result is not surprising as these destinations usually have high numbers of attractions and/or facilities where grey nomads do their general grocery and other forms of shopping. Furthermore, the types of grey nomads visiting these locations are self-funded and have a higher retirement income. Grey nomads residing in caravan parks at small coastal and inland towns had a lower expenditure. A significant statistical difference existed between the amounts

*Table 5.5. The difference in grey nomad expenditure while travelling or at a destination (comparison between grey nomads residing in a caravan park or camping).*

		Surveyed Population	Cost Travel	Cost Destination
Camping	Av.	\$105.36	\$127.84	\$94.24
	Median	\$80.00	\$105.00	\$55.50
Caravan Park	Av.	\$127.77	\$160.65	\$111.47
	Median	\$100.00	\$150.00	\$80.00

*Table 5.6. The mean expenditure of grey nomads at a particular type of destination.*

Destination		Caravan Park (\$)	Camping (\$)
Large Coastal Centre	Mean	102.54	NA
	Median	72.50	
Small Coastal Town	Mean	83.24	NA
	Median	35.00	
Large Inland Centre	Mean	125.70	NA
	Median	100.00	
Small Inland Town	Mean	88.74	NA
	Median	70.00	
Tourism City	Mean	143.15	NA
	Median	100.00	
Remote	Mean	NA	126.82
	Median		45.50
Coastal Camping	Mean	NA	71.93
	Median		47.50
Inland Camping (no permanent water)	Mean	NA	89.44
	Median		82.50
Inland Camping (permanent water)	Mean	NA	91.00
	Median		50.00
Inland Camping (with facilities)	Mean	NA	101.06
	Median		70.00
Sig. within each group df=4		$\chi^2 =$	<.001 19.494 .726 2.388

NA: Data not available

of daily expenditure by the surveyed grey nomads residing in large coastal cities versus their counterparts in small coastal towns (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=7532.000$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.046$ ) and large inland centres (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=12210.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.021$ ). In addition, a significant statistical difference also existed in the amount of daily expenditure between the surveyed grey nomads residing in small coastal towns and large inland centres (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=8280.50$ ,  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ ).

The type of retirement income also influenced a grey nomad's daily expenditure (Kruskal-Wallis test:  $\chi^2 = 27.560$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ ). Grey nomads who were self-funded had statistically different amounts of daily expenditure once at a destination compared to those surveyed grey nomads receiving a full government pension (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=29668.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ ). Grey nomads who were self-funded had an average daily expenditure of \$127.00 (median \$90.00), compared to the average daily expenditure of \$87.00 (median \$50.00) for grey nomads travelling on a pension. Similarly, self-funded grey nomads also had a statistically different amount of a daily expenditure at a destination than those grey nomads who were receiving a part-pension (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=12296.000$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.033$ ). Grey nomads travelling on a part-pension had a daily average expenditure of \$89.00 (median \$65.00). No significant statistical difference existed between the amount of daily expenditure once at a destination for the surveyed grey nomads on a full government pension or part pension (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=13574.000$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.348$ ). This result is not surprising as grey nomads on a full pension or a part-pension may not have a large retirement income compared to self-funded retirees. In addition, grey nomads receiving a pension have a high tendency to camp rather than stay in a caravan parks to reduce their expenditure.

## 5:12. Conclusion

The socio-economic and demographic characteristics of grey nomads surveyed in this study mimic those found in the studies by Pollard (1996), Ming (1997), and Greiner *et al.* (2003). For example, grey nomads were aged between 62 to 65 years of age and travel primarily as a male and female couple. In addition, surveyed male grey

nomads were primarily employed in the trades or management positions before retirement, while females were employed as house wives or in clerical duties. Results from this study reported that most grey nomads have achieved some level of formal education. In addition, surveyed grey nomads have been retired on average for four to six years, have varying scales of retirement income and most stated owning their family home. Furthermore, the majority of grey nomads came from the south eastern states, although this result was predictable as the majority of Australia's population resides in this area. Comparison using the national health survey against the health status of surveyed grey nomads indicates that grey nomads are generally in better health than Australian retirees who do not undertaken extended winter trips.

Variations in the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of grey nomads, however, became apparent when considering the differences in locations visited during their travels. Length of retirement and type of financial retirement scheme influenced a grey nomad's choice of destination. In contrast, age had very little to do with a grey nomad's decision to camp or stay in caravan parks, and nor did it determine their choice of destination. This result is understandable as grey nomads retire at different ages, which may influence mobility and destination choice. However, there was a trend amongst older self-funded grey nomads to seek out remote destinations – to ‘expand their horizons’ and live an ‘Ulyssean lifestyle’. Characteristics like previous employment, especially amongst the surveyed male grey nomads, also influenced the choice of accommodation (i.e. camping or caravan parks). The decision by many grey nomads to reside in a caravan park or to camp was a reflection of their economic security. Grey nomads on pensions tended to seek out cheaper forms of accommodation compared to those grey nomads who are self-funded retirees. Furthermore, a grey nomad's retirement funding also reflected their amount of daily expenditure once at a destination, with those grey nomads receiving a pension or part-pension having lower daily expenditure rates than grey nomads who were self funded. These results suggest that grey nomads are not a homogenous population and that notable difference exists in a variety of characteristics.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Motivation and Planning Behind a Trip**

#### **6:1. Introduction**

The planning and motivation behind the winter trips of grey nomads is complex and very individualistic. This chapter will discuss the results from the qualitative interviews regarding the level of pre-planning that goes into a grey nomad's trip. A brief discussion on the reasons why grey nomads undertake such journeys will also be presented.

#### **6:2. The Planning and Motivation of a Grey Nomad's Trip**

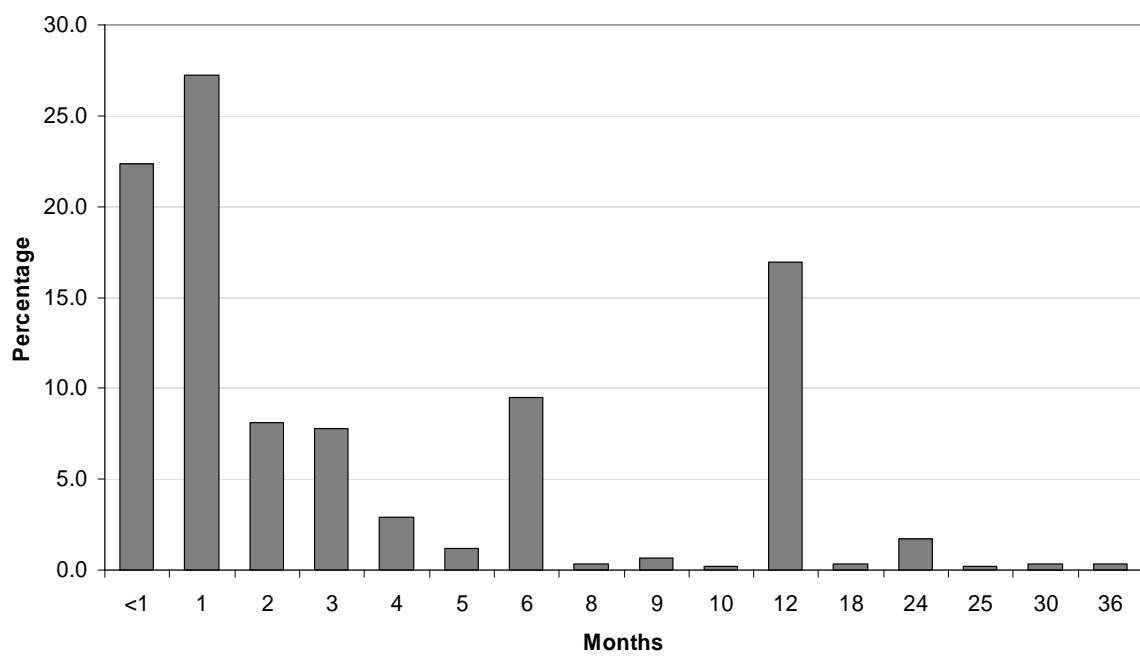
The pre-departure planning process and motivation to travel can contribute to differences in mobility. Some grey nomads prior to departure structure their journey completely and can provide information on what destinations they will visit at any given date. Other grey nomads plan out which destinations to visit, but have no set date for arrival. A few grey nomads have no plans. They just have a vague idea of the direction and routes they want to travel and will "*let the road take us wherever*" (Grey nomad, diary comment No 384). Thus, the majority of grey nomads do not fully structure their trip. Rather, most like to keep a flexible itinerary (semi-structured). Not having a stringent itinerary adds greater flexibility to their trip and allows for any whimsical changes at a moments notice. However, as grey nomad numbers increase and the number of available caravan park sites decrease, the need for greater structuring of trips may be required in the future. Changes to plans can be brought about by vehicle breakdowns, illness, weather, word of mouth (i.e. told of interesting places to visit) and the social atmosphere at a destination. The following sub-sections will consider the level of planning grey nomads make before they depart on their journey and the motivation to travel.

### 6:2.1. Planning a Grey Nomad's Trip

Approximately 950 of the grey nomad travel parties surveyed answered the question regarding the length of time they started planning their current trip. Information about the planning of a grey nomad's trip was also obtained from the structured and semi-structured interviews. On average, the grey nomads surveyed started planning their winter journey approximately four months before departure (median = two months). However, a proportion of grey nomads stated that they planned out their trip only one to two months before departing (35.3 per cent or n=209) (see Figure 6.1). Results from the field interviews suggested that the planning for these trips usually involved a couple discussing which destinations they wished to visit, and possible routes. Usually a select number of destinations were chosen along a network of routes for visitation (i.e. primary destinations). These destinations generally had well known attractions. Longreach, for example, has the Stockman's Hall of Fame and the Qantas Museum. In addition, less known destinations (i.e. secondary destinations) were also chosen, but these destinations may alter during the actual trip. The process of planning a trip can be seen in this grey nomad's comments:

*"We watch shows like the 'Great Outdoors' and 'Getaway', plus we read a lot of caravanning magazines and these give us ideas on places to visit.....We constantly talk about visiting this place or seeing that.....I guess we start seriously discussing places to visit about three months before leaving.....Other places are chosen while we travel.....but as for getting ready to go, that starts only a few weeks before we leave". (Grey nomad, No. 8)*

Almost a quarter (n=132) of the grey nomads surveyed stated that they started planning for their trip less than one month before departing. All of these grey nomads had made at least five extended winter trips in the past. Hence, these grey nomads were well travelled and confident in their travelling ability, with a considerable knowledge of destinations and attractions. Thus, the need for extensive planning was deemed unnecessary. The planning for these trips usually involved making sure that the vehicle (including caravan) was mechanically sound and packed, equipment was ready (e.g. boat, fishing gear, camping items) and that logistical matters at home would be taken care of during their absence. The choice of destinations may have been formulated a few months prior to leaving, but preparations for the trip were only



*Figure 6.1. The number of months grey nomads take in planning for a particular trip.*

undertaken a few weeks before departure. Almost half of the grey nomads who undertook minimal planning and preparation for their trip, travelled to one destination for the entire winter. Planning for these grey nomads was minimal, as their chosen destinations were booked and secured in advance and movement was routine (i.e. same pattern as the year or years before). The remainder had ideas about which possible routes and destinations they wished to visit, but had no set time frame/itinerary. A number of interviews with grey nomads supported the claim of a lack of planning. One grey nomad stated:

*"We have done a lot of travelling and have seen a fair bit of the country; we just like to get away and feel free. There is no need for much planning. We just go.....if we like a place we'll stay a few days or a week or two, if we don't we just move on."* (Grey nomad, No. 1)

The study by Oryx and Leonard (2005) on grey nomads suggested that many grey nomads, especially amongst those who camp, travel for a lifestyle change and freedom from the structured lifestyle they led during their years of employment. Not planning their trip may be considered as a way for these grey nomads to develop a greater sense of freedom and well-being.

Only 13.5 per cent (n=80) of the surveyed grey nomads planned their trip four to six months ahead. Another 16.9 per cent (n=100) of the grey nomads surveyed stated that they planned their trips twelve months in advance. Less than three per cent (n=15) of the surveyed grey nomads planned more than twelve months in advance. The last two results suggest that some grey nomads are planning their following year's trip whilst still travelling on their current trip. This finding is understandable, as trying to see all of Australia in one trip is time consuming and expensive given the size of the continent. With the rising cost of travel, many grey nomads divide Australia into regions and will choose to visit different regions each year. Hence, the increasing cost of travel may see a decline in the number of grey nomads undertaking the traditional trip around Australia. Choosing to explore Australia in sections was seen as cost effective and allowed for greater time to explore a region. This planning procedure can be seen in this quote from one grey nomad:

*"We plan to travel around Queensland this year and do the Northern Territory and possibly Western Australia next year. We thought about doing it in one fell swoop but decided that by breaking it up*

*we'll have more time to see more things.....plus it is cheaper.....Giving us another year to save up.....We find travelling to be more relaxing that way".* (Grey nomad, No. 24)

Most grey nomads travel as couples, so deciding upon which destinations to visit was often a compromise. Such a response came from one grey nomad who stated:

*"We generally decide together, I want to see this and my wife wants to see that, we just fit it all in. If not we do it the next year. It isn't hard, we've been married for almost 45 years, I think we both know what the other likes."* (Grey nomad, No. 18)

However, the choice of destination can sometimes be dominated by one individual in the couple and the other is "just happy to go long" (Grey nomad No. 12). Some grey nomads were not fussed about which destinations they visited; just getting away from their usual lifestyle and enjoying the warmth of northern Australia was exciting enough. Furthermore, as most grey nomads are married couples, seeing their partner active and happy was motivation to visit particular destinations. This choice was highlighted in one grey nomad's statement:

*"I wasn't too fussed about coming here at first, I thought that there was nothing really here, but my husband loves to fish and everyone here is lovely.....We've made good friends and the fishing keeps him active.....so we come back each year."* (Grey nomad, No. 22)

### **6:2.2. Motivation for Taking a Trip**

Rarely was there only one reason for grey nomads undertaking extended winter journeys. Numerous factors motivated grey nomads to travel, although sometimes these factors were very individualistic. This sub-section will explore some of the reasons that motivate grey nomads to leave their permanent place of residence and undertaken seasonal winter travel to northern Australia for an extended period.

The last quote in the previous sub-section suggested that the desire to meet friends motivated travel, especially amongst those grey nomads who visited the same destination each year. Friendships developed during numerous past trips to the same destination can add to the pull factor of a destination. Sullivan (1985) suggests the 'Ties that Bind' an individual to a destination can influence their willingness to leave

or in turn visit a location. Grey nomads that visit only the one destination each year for the entire winter can develop strong ties to both the winter destination and other grey nomads with similar interests and mobility. Approximately fourteen per cent (N=161) of the grey nomads surveyed fit into this group (having a stay greater than 60 days at one destination). These ties help motivate both destination choice and length of stay.

Tourism marketing agencies are currently debating the necessity of developing theme routes to promote a region to the drive market (Olsen, 2003). A theme route is a highway or a network of highways/roads that depict or follow a particular theme. The Matilda Highway, for example, incorporates sections of the Mitchell and Landsborough Highways and follows the theme and story of Banjo Patterson's song '*Waltzing Matilda*'. Approximately twenty theme routes were being promoted in Australia during 2003, and more were being developed (Olsen, 2003). During the field interviews with grey nomads, many suggested that theme routes were secondary in deciding on where they will visit. Most grey nomads stated that they generally picked a destination first, and then decided on the routes they will take; the theme doesn't come into consideration. This result supports findings from Taylor *et. al's.* (2001) study about individuals planning a self drive vacation. The process of choosing a destination and route was best described by one grey nomad:

*"First we decide on the destinations we want to visit and then discuss which way we are going to get there.....We generally pick two routes..... We like to travel in a loop as much as possible and try not to travel the same route home as we travelled up."* (Grey nomad, No. 10)

Motivation to travel, visit or explore the country was a major consideration involved in the process of planning a trip. The motivation behind each trip may be different for each grey nomad and it can dictate why and which destinations a grey nomad visits. From the survey, 874 grey nomad travel parties identified reasons for undertaking extended winter journeys to northern Australia. Three hundred and forty-five grey nomads gave multiple responses. Each multiple response was counted as a separate reason to visit northern Australia. Hence, in excess of 1 200 responses to the question asking why grey nomads undertook extended winter trips were collected. Over 42 per cent of the grey nomad travel parties surveyed (n=524) stated that

escaping the winter cold and visiting the warmer climate of northern Australia was the main reason for taking this type of journey (see Figure 6.2). Three hundred and thirteen of the multiple responses had the weather as one of their motivators. Another 22 per cent of grey nomads (n=293) stated that seeing Australia (this included historical locations and the Australian landscape) was their main reason for travelling. Going on an ‘adventure’ and ‘getting away’ was also a high reason for taking winter trips (ten per cent or n=134). Only two of the 345 multiple responses did not state either ‘seeing Australia’ or adventure/get aways as one of their reasons for travel. Interestingly, while seeing Australia was a high motivation to travel, experiencing ‘Indigenous culture’ (0.7 per cent) and ‘meeting other travellers’ (0.6 per cent) elicited a low response. This result may indicate a low interest in Indigenous Australia amongst the grey nomads, possibly because they have grown up hearing about Indigenous Australia and seeing their artwork.

Whilst the onset of winter is a strong motivator for grey nomads to undertake extended journeys to northern Australia, the weather was not the only factor that underpinned their desire to travel. Palmer (2000) and Onyx and Leonard (2005) suggested that many grey nomads travel as a means of reconnecting with their country or for nostalgic reasons: revisiting places from their youth. These grey nomad comments support Palmer’s and Onyx’s and Leonard’s findings:

*“My husband worked out here when he was younger and he wanted to revisit some of the places and see how much they have changed.”*  
(Grey nomad, No. 31)

*“It’s great just to get out here and experience our great country.”*  
(Grey nomad, field diary comment, No. 38)

*“We live in the most amazing country in the world. Why would I want to go overseas when we have so much to see and do here.....We’ve both worked hard all our life and we deserve to enjoy life and see our country.”* (Grey nomad, No. 1)

As some of the above quotes suggest, many grey nomads are immensely proud of Australia and their Australian heritage. This high sense of nationalism amongst grey nomads helps motivates their desire to travel. In addition, Onyx and Leonard (2007) highlighted the strong desire amongst grey nomads to learn about Australia.

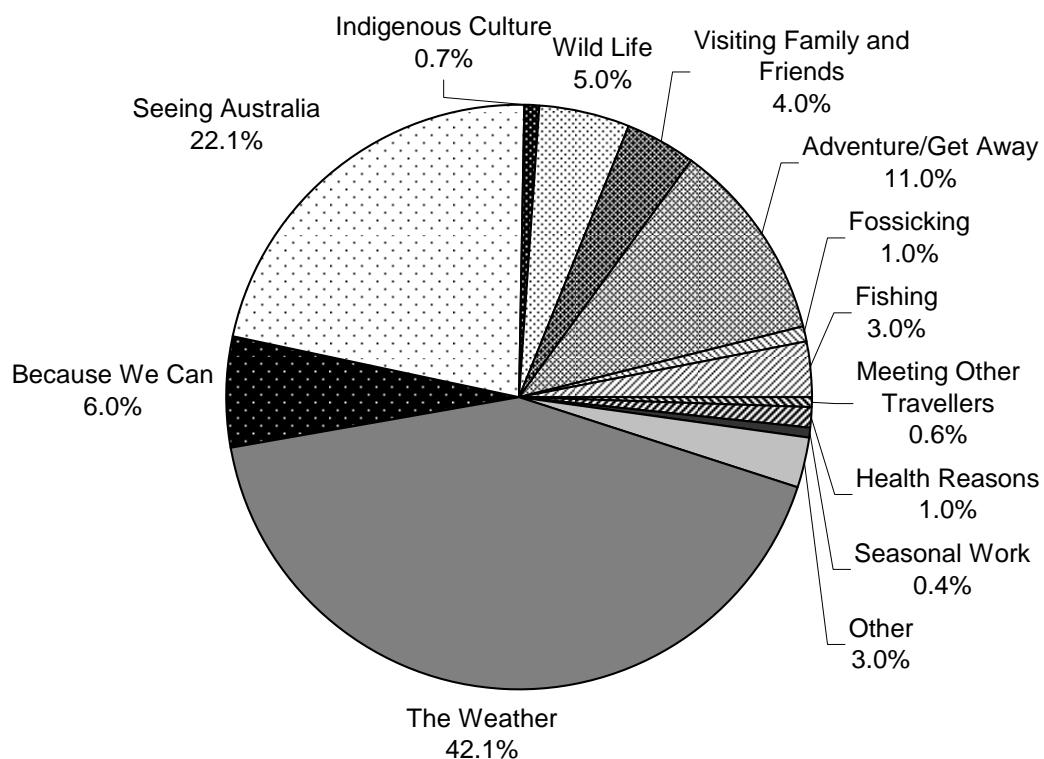


Figure 6.2. The motivation to undertake extended winter journeys to northern Australia ( $n=847$  travel parties)

Travelling provides grey nomads with the opportunity to learn and experience Australiana and to develop a sense of belonging and appreciation for their country. Across Australia, however, there is a growing sense of nationalism, amongst all generations, not just the grey nomads (Pakulski, 2000). This growth in nationalism is evident, for example, by the growing numbers of Australians participating in ANZAC day ceremonies and making the annual pilgrimage to Gallipoli. Some grey nomads are so proud of their country that they fly Australian flags on top of the caravans or motor home (see Plate 6.1 a/b). This practice was observed during the field work in many caravan parks in all parts of northern Australia. In one caravan park at Bowen in North Queensland, a entire lane way of grey nomad caravans, twenty in total, displayed Australian flags outside their caravans.

Grey nomads travel as a means of escaping the shackles that bound them during their employment and family raising years. Onyx and Leonard (2005) suggested that grey nomads desire freedom and control over their life. Grey nomads were strongly motivated to travel because they can feel and/or develop a sense of freedom in later life. Many grey nomads provided statements like the following comment:

*“Now that we are retired and the kids have moved away, we have time to ourselves. We own our home and the pressures of work, kids and the mortgage are gone. We are free to do what ever we want.”*  
(Grey nomad, No. 11)

Grey nomads also travel in order to have a break from their usual lifestyle. In Figure 6.2, eleven per cent of grey nomads stated getting away and having an adventure was a high motivator for them to travel. Onyx and Leonard (2007) and Onyx *et. al.* (2007) highlighted the importance for retirees, in particular grey nomads, to be active, and travel was one method that fulfils that goal. Moreover, many grey nomads see these extended winter trips as warding off old age. During conversations, a few grey nomads jokingly stated that they were on ‘VIAGRA’ trips (Veterans Ignoring Age Going Round Australia). For the majority of the grey nomads interviewed, travel breaks up their year. They have the opportunity to live two types of lifestyles, which are quite different. “*Variety is the spice of life*” (Grey nomad, diary comment No. B45) one grey nomad commented, comparing her lifestyle travelling to her lifestyle at home. Other grey nomads gave similar responses such as:



(a)



(b)

*Plate 6.1(a and b). Grey nomads displaying the Australian flag. The ring in plate b identifies the location of the Australian flags. (Source: Cridland, 2007)*

*“Life would be fairly boring if we didn’t travel. This is not to say that we don’t do anything when we are home. There is always something that has to be done.....We are more active when we travel. We walk more when we are away than when we are at home and are constantly on the go.....It is a completely different lifestyle. When we go away we don’t have to worry about all the usual home stuff.”* (Grey nomad, No. 13)

*“We love the lifestyle. We are always doing something. Who wants to sit at home. We are still young [69 years of age]. If we stay at home and did nothing we’d only grow old.”* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. A101)

*“It’s funny; my wife hardly exercises at all at home. Getting her out for an evening walk is a major event but when we are away, she is all over the place – a lot more active.....We are both getting older and since she is so active when we are away, we find ourselves being away for a longer period now.”* (Grey nomad, No. 1)

A grey nomad’s desire to be free will also dictate their mobility and their choice of destinations. For some grey nomads, freedom is sought through camping and getting away from the standard tourist locations. This concept will be discussed in later chapters.

### **6:3. Conclusion**

This chapter examined the amount of planning grey nomads make for their trip. In addition, the motivation behind a grey nomad’s trip was also discussed. Most grey nomads plan their trip less than six months in advance and that the level of planning will vary in accordance with the amount of previous trips and/or the nature of visitation to a destination. The motivation behind why a grey nomad travels will vary as the needs and desires for each grey nomad are very individualistic. Many of the results regarding motivation to travel from this study support findings by Palmer (2000) and Onyx and Leonard (2005; 2007). Whilst most grey nomads stated that the warm weather of northern Australia during winter was a strong motivator to travel, more subtle factors also influenced the desire to travel. Some factors that motivated a grey nomad to travel included the desire to have a sense of freedom in their life, to feel active whilst in retirement and to learn more about Australia and Australiana.

Results from this study support the idea put forward by Onyx and Leonard (2007) that many grey nomads travel to live an Ulyssean type of lifestyle. The increasing cost of travel and closures of caravan parks, however, may impede on the desire or the financial capabilities of some grey nomads to undertake such trips. How these factors may influence mobility and motivation to travel is explored further in Chapter Nine.

## **Chapter Seven**

## **Grey Nomad Mobility Part 1**

### **7:1. Introduction**

The discussion on grey nomad mobility is divided into two chapters. This chapter will examine the overall mobility patterns of grey nomads as a single population. Mings (1997) concluded that grey nomads rarely travel in a large structured group; rather they generally travel as an autonomous group (i.e. usually couples travelling in the one vehicle or individuals), visiting different destinations and undertaking different activities. Hence, it would be reasonable to assume that grey nomad mobility will vary between travel groups due to differences in their socio-economic status, preference in destination choice and recreational activities undertaken at a destination. Very little research has been conducted into the mobility patterns of grey nomads and how movement varies amongst different segments of the population. This chapter will explore characteristics of grey nomad mobility, including a travel party's length of trip, length of stay at a destination, kilometres travelled in a day (en route and whilst at a destination); highway networks travelled, and the type of vehicle driven.

### **7:2. Grey Nomad's Length of Trip**

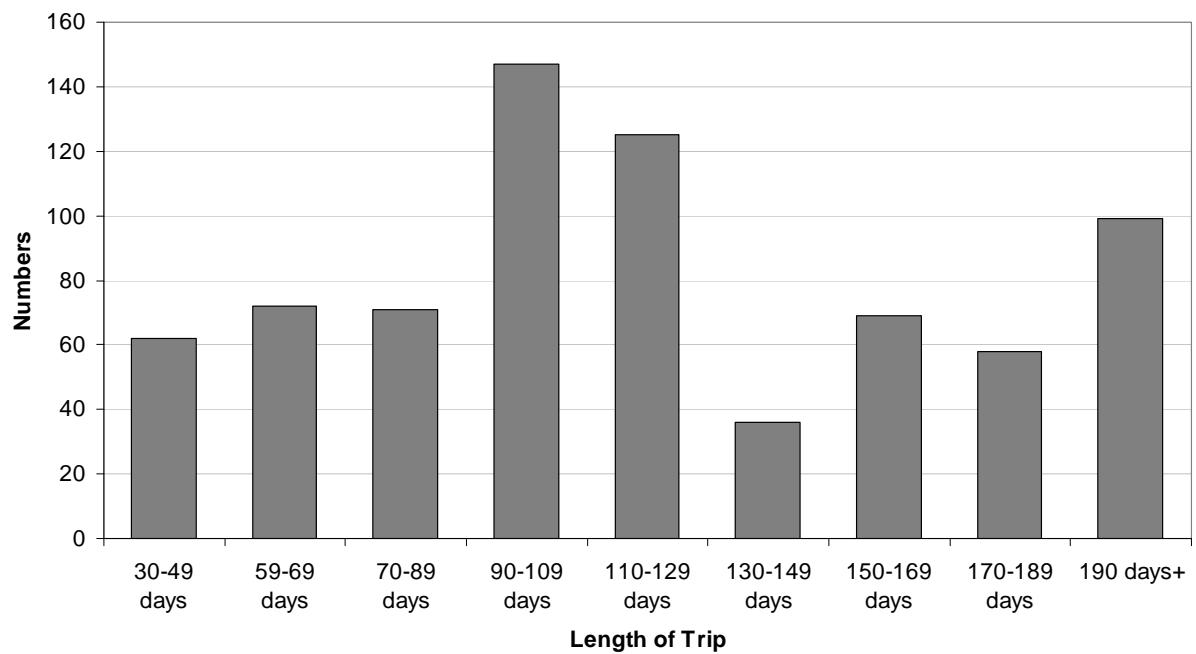
Only grey nomads travelling for a period of twelve months or less were included in this discussion. Grey nomads omitted from this analysis included the 90 grey nomads who had no permanent address and were living a nomadic lifestyle, and the three grey nomads who did have a permanent address, but were travelling for a period greater than one year. There were also 128 grey nomads who stated that they had no fixed timetable for their return home (permanent address) so they were also omitted from this analysis. This last figure suggests that a proportion of grey nomads do not overly plan their trip and their travel itinerary is very flexible. Five grey nomads failed to answer the question regarding the commencement date of their trip

and their intended time of return. In total, 742 grey nomads travel parties identified on the questionnaire the date they commenced their current trip and expected date of return. However, some grey nomads only provided an approximate date for their return (e.g. late September); hence, in some cases the length of journey was only an estimation. If grey nomads stated that they were returning to their usual place of residence in 'late September', their date of return was given as the 30<sup>th</sup> September (early September - 1<sup>st</sup> September; mid September – 15<sup>th</sup> September). An exact date for the commencement of their journey was provided by most respondents, but in the event that an approximate date was provided (e.g. early May), the above assumptions were also undertaken. The author was aware that this methodology will create a slight bias in the analysis, but this method should only bias the data by no more than approximately fourteen days.

Results from this study were consistent with Mings' (1997) findings regarding the length of a grey nomad's journey. Mings concluded that the mean length of a grey nomad's was 128 days. Grey nomad travel parties surveyed in this study travelled for an average of 126 days (median=115 days). Very few of the grey nomads surveyed travelled for a period of less than 60 days (14.8 per cent) or more than 180 days (14.3 per cent). Nineteen per cent of grey nomads travelled for a duration of 61 to 89 days and less than sixteen per cent stayed away between 131 and 179 days. Over a third (36 per cent) of grey nomads surveyed stated that they would be away from the usual place of residence for a period of 90 to 130 days. Thus, the highest proportion of grey nomads travelled for a period of three to four months (see Figure 7.1).

### **7:3. Length of a Grey Nomad's Stay at the Survey Location**

Approximately 950 of the grey nomad travel parties surveyed provided information on the length of stay at the survey destination. A further thirty-five grey nomads stated that they were not sure how long they intended to stay at their current location. The average length of stay for a grey nomad at the survey destination was 22 nights. However, the median was five nights and the most frequent length of stay was



*Figure 7.1. The amount of time grey nomad travel parties were absent from their usual place of residence.*

two nights. The high variation in the central tendency of the length of stay suggested that the majority of the surveyed grey nomads tended to have short stays at a destination (less than a week) while a small number stayed at one destination for the entire winter. These differences in length of stays were possibly a reflection of the type of destination a grey nomad visits, with destinations serving a different function and purpose for each travelling grey nomad. Locations, for example, that have a beach front may serve as a grey nomad's primary destination. Here they will reside at this destination for the entire winter, while others will only stay at such a destination for a few nights. Conversely, a destination located in an arid or semi-arid inland region may act as only an overnight resting location whilst travelling en route to a more preferred destination on the coast. Less than 22 per cent of the grey nomads surveyed stayed at the destination where they were interviewed for a period greater than 30 nights and almost 30 per cent will stay more than two weeks. Sixty-five per cent of the grey nomads surveyed stayed no more than a week at their chosen destination (see Figure 7.2).

#### **7:4. Number of Past Journeys**

Approximately 950 grey nomads gave details regarding the number of extended self-drive trips (for a period greater than 30 days) made to northern Australia during winter since retiring. On average, surveyed grey nomads had undertaken six trips in the past, not including the current trip (median=four trips). The number of past trips range from first timers ( $n=68$ ) to one grey nomad who had taken 30 trips since retiring. Just over 70 per cent of the grey nomads surveyed had taken at least six trips, whilst over ten per cent had taken ten trips or more (see Figure 7.3). The number of trips start to decline noticeably after the second to fourth trip. However, the number of trips taken begins to stabilise after the seventh trip. Five possible reasons may contribute to this pattern. First, the increase in the baby boomer generation entering retirement may have inflated the number of grey nomads on their first or second trip. Another possible reason can be associated with the frailties of age, which makes travelling difficult and can lead to a natural attrition in grey nomad

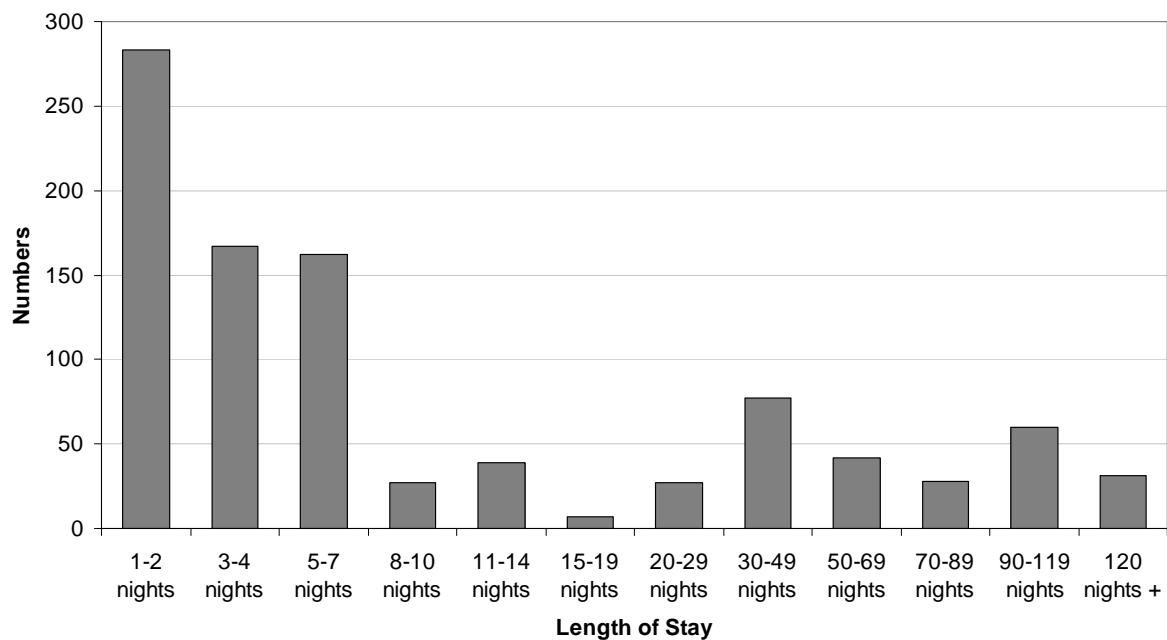


Figure 7.2. The number of grey nomad travel parties categorised according to the length of stay at their destination where they were surveyed.

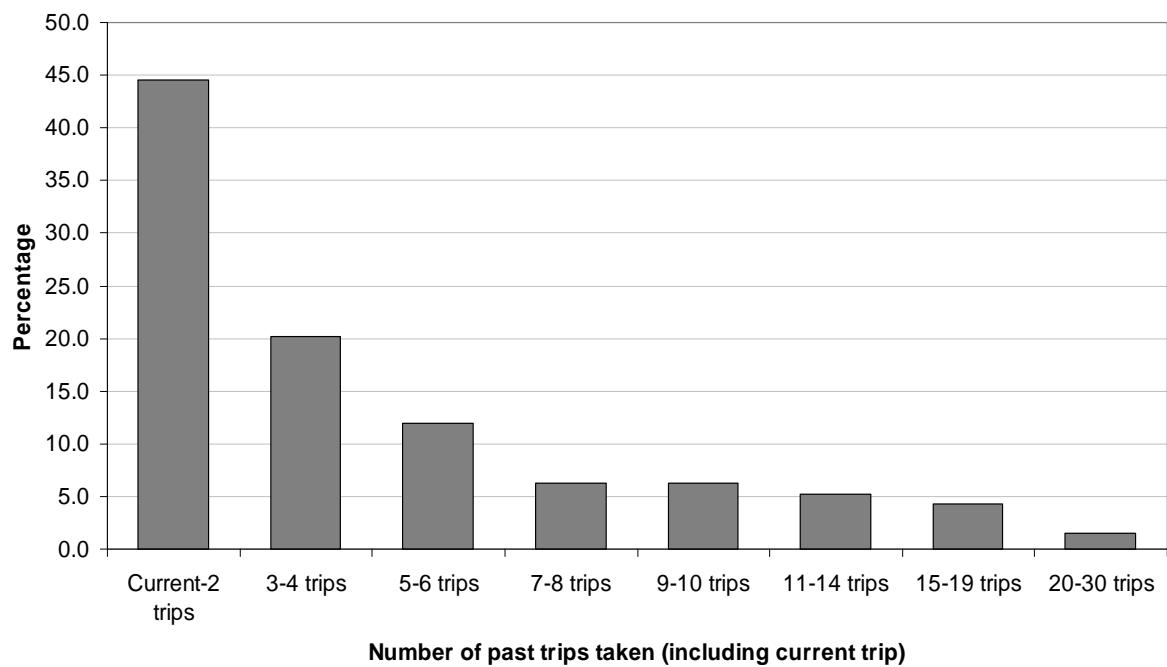


Figure 7.3. The number of self drive trips made to northern Australia for a period greater than 30 days since retiring (per travel party).

numbers over time. Illness or death of a partner and the idea of travelling alone may lessen the desire to travel, reducing the number of trips. Some grey nomads may place too high an expectation on living a grey nomadic lifestyle. These grey nomads with inflated expectations may feel that travelling is unfulfilling and may cease undertaking yearly trips. Lastly, other factors such as socio-economic/demographic pressures like affordability of living and travelling, plus overcrowding at destinations, may hinder the desire to take winter trips, but anecdotal evidence suggests that this factor may only have a minimal influence in limiting the number of additional trips taken.

## **7:5. Kilometres Travelled in a Day**

Grey nomads are very mobile individuals, with many travelling in excess of 10 000 kilometres in a single annual journey. There are two sub-sections in the discussion regarding the average number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled daily. The first sub-section considers the kilometres travelled in a day when a grey nomad is changing their location (i.e. when en route to another destination). The second sub-section explores their movement once at a destination.

### **7:5.1. Estimated Kilometres Travelled in a Day whilst En Route**

Approximately 950 grey nomads provided information regarding the estimated amount of kilometres generally travelled in a day when driving to a new destination. On average, the surveyed grey nomads travelled approximately 330 km in a day whilst en route (median and the mode=300 km, respectively). Only eighteen per cent of the grey nomads surveyed drove no more than 200 km, whilst 16.2 per cent travelled more than 400 km. Hence, approximately 65 per cent of the grey nomads surveyed drove between 200 km and 400 km a day when travelling to a new destination (see Figure 7.4). The shortest distance a grey nomad travelled to arrive at a different destination was 30 km ( $n=1$ ), and with the greatest amount of kilometres driven being almost 1 000 km ( $n=1$ ).

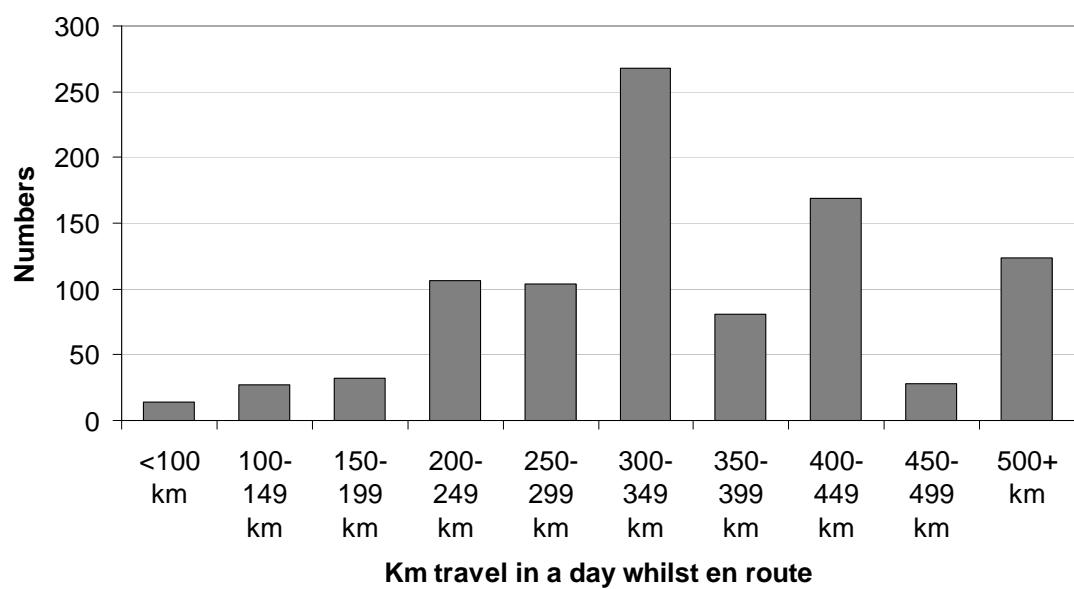


Figure 7.4. The distances covered daily by grey nomad travel parties when moving to a new destination. (n=949)

During the field interviews, most grey nomads stated that they preferred to only travel until ‘lunch time’, so that they could spend the afternoon resting or preparing for ‘Happy Hour’: a time between 3.00pm and 6.00pm - dependant on the time of sunset - when grey nomads gathered outside their motor home/caravan either as individuals or in small to large groups to socialise and relax. This response was typical of surveyed grey nomads:

*“I’m getting too old to drive all day long. We usually only drive up until lunch. ....This leaves us with the afternoon to shop, look around and just relax..... We’re not in any rush.”* (Grey nomad, No. 2)

When grey nomads leave a destination to travel to another, the bulk of the exodus usually occurs between 8.00am and 9.00am in the morning (see Plate 7.1a). Since the average distance a grey nomad travels in a day whilst en route to a destination is 330 km, this distance should take a grey nomad towing a caravan or driving a motor home approximately four to five hours. This time frame includes the ‘mandatory morning tea break’, usually at a rest area on the side of the road. Most grey nomads try to arrive at their new destination between midday and 1.00pm (i.e. lunchtime), or before the caravan parks begin to fill (see Plate 7.1b).

### **7:5.2. Estimated Kilometres Travelled in a Day whilst at a Destination**

A total of 915 grey nomads provided information on the amount of kilometres usually travelled whilst at a destination. Figure 7.5 shows the number of grey nomads categorised according to the kilometres they travelled in a day whilst at a destination. On average, a surveyed grey nomad will travel 46 km at a destination (median=30; mode=50). Over 30 per cent of grey nomads stated that they usually travelled less than 10 km. Conversely, just over 20 per cent of the surveyed grey nomads stated that they usually drive on average in excess of 75 km in a day when at a destination, of which approximately ten per cent drive more than 100 km (n=174). This result indicated that the majority of grey nomads tended not to venture too far whilst at a destination and will only usually visit attractions that are within a 30 km to 50 km radius of their chosen destination. However, this result may be biased towards grey nomads residing in coastal destinations where attractions are usually located locally and often pick up transportation is provided. In addition, the results may be skewed

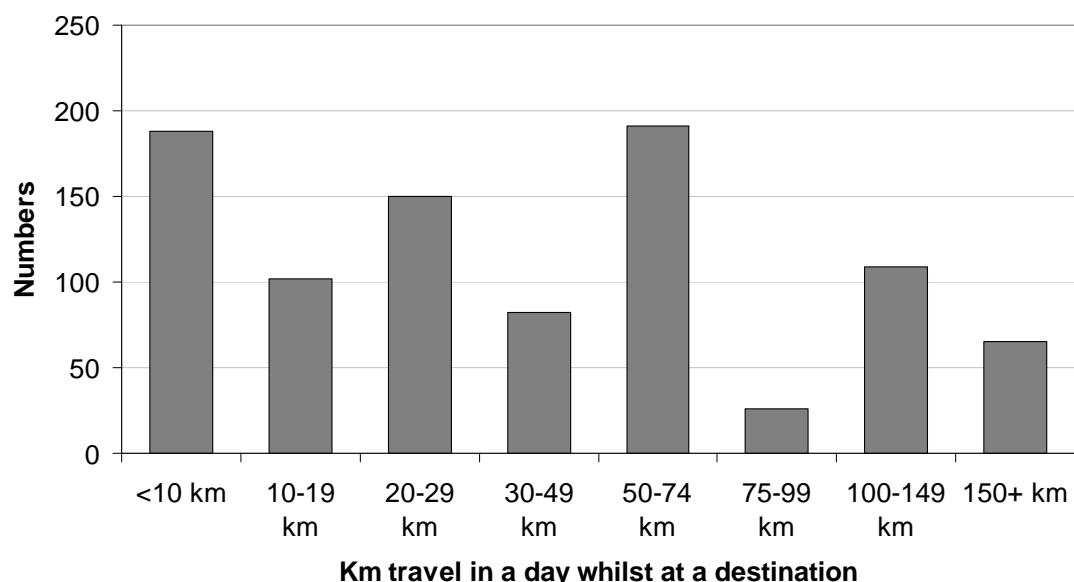


(a)



(b)

*Plate 7.1. (a): A caravan park at Winton QLD at 9.00 am, showing empty sites after the exodus of caravanners. (b): Photo of the same caravan taken at 2.30 pm on the same day. The caravan park is full.*



*Figure 7.5. The distances covered by surveyed grey nomads in a day whilst at a destination (per travel party).*

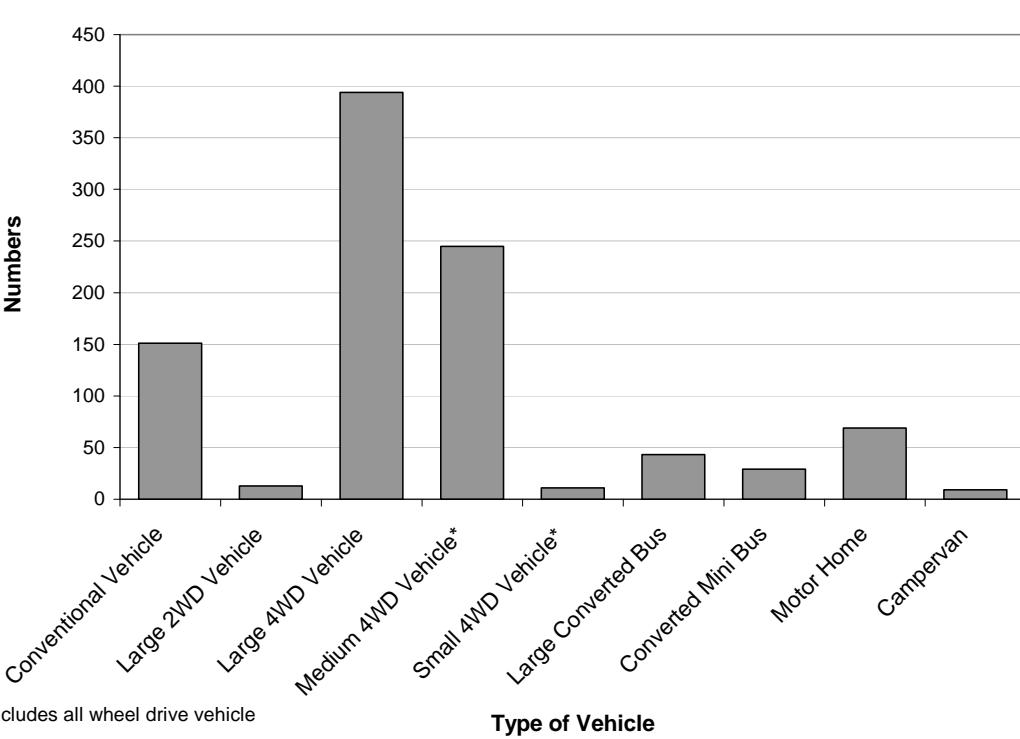
because of those grey nomads who reside in one location for the entire winter, and who had a lower mobility once at a destination (discussed in section 8:5).

### **7:6. A Grey Nomad's Vehicle**

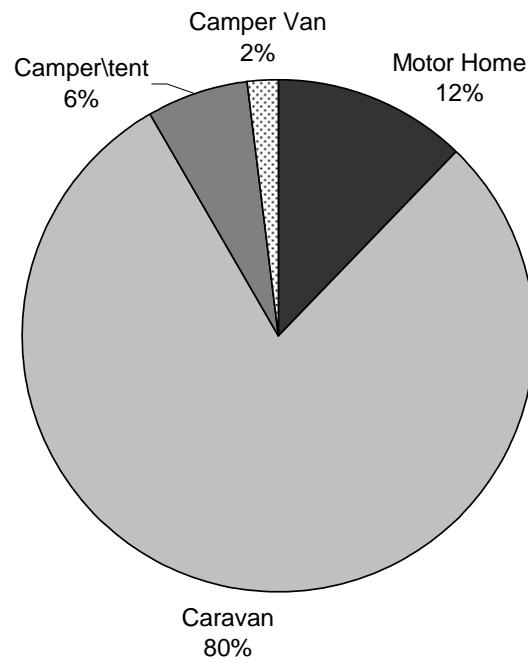
Grey nomads travel in a wide range of vehicles (see Figure 7.6). All the grey nomads surveyed identified what type of vehicle they used as their primary mode of transport (n=964). The majority (80 per cent) of the grey nomads surveyed travelled with and resided in a caravan during their journey (see Figure 7.7). The caravan classification also included fifth wheelers – see Plate 7.2 a/b. The average size for a caravan was 5.6m, with 70 per cent of the caravans being built between 1998 and 2006. Most of these caravans were being towed behind a large (e.g. Toyota Landcruisers) to medium sized (e.g. Mitsubishi Pajero) four wheel drive vehicle (over 68 per cent), built between 2001 and 2006 (56 per cent). Approximately seventeen per cent of the vehicles towing caravans were conventional two wheel drive vehicles.

Twelve per cent of the grey nomads surveyed were travelling in a motor home. The motor home classification included large converted coaches, mini buses and purpose built vehicles. A small percentage of surveyed grey nomads drove large converted coaches (1.3 per cent), whilst converted mini buses made up 3.1 per cent. The majority of converted coaches (87 per cent) were manufactured between 1964 and 1978. Mini buses, on the other hand, were constructed between 1984 and 1999 (71 per cent). The year in which these vehicles were converted to recreational vehicles was not asked or identified in this study. Approximately 7.5 per cent of the surveyed grey nomads drove in a purpose built motor home. Most of these motor homes are of recent construction, or built after 2000. A high proportion of the larger motor homes and buses also towed a smaller vehicle for every day use (see Plates 7.3 a/b).

Campervans are smaller in size and fewer in number than motor homes and were driven by two per cent of the surveyed population. Campervans were the standard commercial one tonne vans which had been converted to accommodate



*Figure 7.6. The types of vehicles used by grey nomad travel parties during their trips.*



*Figure 7.7. The main mode of travel/accommodation of the surveyed grey nomad travel parties.*



(a)



(b)

*Plate 7.2(a and b). Fifth Wheelers (Source: Cridland, 2007)*



(a)



(b)

*Plate 7.3.(a): Converted coach towing a trailer. The trailer contains a small vehicle for every day use. (b): Motor home with a small car and trailer. (Source: Cridland, 2006)*

overnight stays. Most campervans were equipped with an inbuilt fridge, stove, cabinets and a bed. The lack of storage space and confined area within a campervan was considered by many grey nomads to be a limitation when on extended trips. However, these limitations were not of high concern amongst campervaners and the ease in travel that campervans provide (i.e. limited set up time and greater mobility) more than makes up for restricted space. This sentiment amongst campervanners was highlighted in the following response:

*“Motor home, yes they have more space but they are bigger and harder to manoeuvre. Getting into certain places can be hard, plus there is a lot more expense in running.....It takes us about 10 minutes, if that, to set up.....The secret of fitting everything in, is that everything has its place and when we are finished with it we put it back in its place.....The lack of space isn’t a problem.”*  
(Grey nomad, diary comment No. A221)

Over six per cent of the grey nomads surveyed were towing camper trailers (n=58) or tenting (solely n=two). However, a further 20 grey nomads were observed residing in tents at the time of surveying (i.e. Gibb River Road: n=nine; Lawn Hill area: n=five; Lakefield National Park: n=six), but stated that they were primarily travelling with a caravan. The majority of caravans were not constructed to withstand the rigours of unsealed roads. Grey nomads visiting remote locations often place their conventional road caravan in storage for a short period, and use tents for accommodation during these side trips. Their caravan is still their main form of accommodation and tents are only used for off-road excursions. Such an arrangement was practiced by the grey nomads who camped in tents whilst in the Kimberley area (along the Gibb River Road), after leaving their caravans at Wyndham, Kununurra or Derby (depending on the direction they were going). They would generally travel along the unsealed Gibb River Road, and then journeyed along the sealed Great Northern Highway, picking up their caravan and finishing the remainder of their trip. This evidence suggests that for some grey nomads visiting the remote location is not the single focus of their trip, but just a part of their overall journey. Such a sentiment is expressed in this Western Australian grey nomad’s comment about visiting the remote Kimberley:

*“We’ll be away for about four months; just travelling up the coast.....We placed the caravan in storage at Derby for two weeks. So we have two weeks to explore the Kimberley and get*

*back to our van..... We'll head back via the highway, pick up our van and slowly head home..... It should take us about six weeks before we get home" (Grey nomad, No. 34).*

Only two of the grey nomads surveyed were staying solely in a tent throughout the entire duration of their journey. All of the interviewed grey nomads who had camper trailers used late model four wheel drives, built after 2000 (see Plate 7.4), except one couple travelling in a conventional two wheel drive vehicle towing a camper trailer.

Whilst caravans, motor homes, campervans and camper trailers/tents were the main form of transportation used by grey nomads, other types of transport were observed. One grey nomad surveyed at Fitzroy Crossing was returning to Busselton (Western Australia) from Karumba (Queensland) in a tractor (see Plate 7.5). A few grey nomads were observed riding motor bikes (mostly Ulysses Bike Club), with many towing small trailers/campers (see Plate 7.6). However, these particular grey nomads declined to be surveyed. Further research into the impact on grey nomad mobility as a result of the differences in these alternative modes of transport could reveal some interesting findings.

## **7:8. Travel Patterns of Grey Nomads**

The majority of grey nomads utilised a wide network of highways during their travels. Approximately 20 per cent of the grey nomads surveyed travelled the identical route north as they do on their return south. This 'straight up' and 'straight back' movement is primarily what Lue *et. al.* (1993) identified as a 'single destination pattern' movement typology, although some 'en route pattern' (side excursions en route) was observed. Lue *et. al.*'s. (1993) 'single destination pattern' is a direct movement involving no stopovers when in transit (see Figure 2.9). However, due to the large distances between destinations in Australia, the 'single destination pattern' amongst grey nomad mobility involves stopovers. These stopovers are necessary and are only used as a place to rest before travelling on to their primary destination. For the grey nomads identified in this study travelling in a 'single destination pattern', all en route stopovers held no interest apart from a place to stay the night. In contrast, grey nomads travelling in an 'en route pattern' considered en route destinations more than just a place to stay overnight. Hence, destinations within an 'en route pattern'



*Plate 7.4. Late model four wheel drive towing a camper trailer on the Gibb River Road* (Source: Cridland, 2006)



*Plate 7.5. One unusual mode of grey nomad transportation* (Source: Cridland, 2006)



*Plate 7.6. Retirees travelling on a motor bike*  
(Source: Complements Ulysses Bike Club, 2004, <http://ulysses-wa.info/>)

were typified as “places of interest to which tourist may detour and invest time” (Lue *et. al.*, 1993: 295). Therefore, grey nomads travelling in either a ‘single destination pattern’ or an ‘en route pattern’ will travel on the same highway networks, but destinations have different importance.

For most surveyed grey nomads, the majority of their movements mimicked what Lue *et. al.* (1993) categorised as a ‘regional tour pattern’ or a ‘trip chaining pattern’, involving the use of multiple routes and destinations. Another type of movement not identified by Lue *et. al.* (1993) had the characteristic of a ‘single destination pattern’ and ‘trip chaining pattern’. This pattern involved at least some of their return journey following an alternate route and resembled a regional pattern typology, but in reverse. Some grey nomads travelling this type of pattern had one primary destination they wished to visit and travelled this alternate route for a change of scenery and to add variety during their trip. Others had no primary destination and move in a ‘trip chaining pattern’, but due to the geographical location of their chosen destinations, they were forced to travel some proportion of their return journey on the same highway network. Hence, this type of movement has been categorised as an ‘alternate return route pattern’ (see Figure 7.8). Few surveyed grey nomads had movements which solely mimicked the ‘base camp pattern’ typology proposed by Lue *et. al.* (1993). Some ‘base camp’ type movement pattern was observed amongst grey nomads travelling either a ‘trip chaining pattern’ or a ‘regional pattern’, but their numbers were small.

The original point of departure and choice of destination will directly influence which highways and road networks were utilised by grey nomads during their journeys. Mings (1989) identified a strong longitudinal movement (north-south movement as opposed to east- west) pattern amongst North American snowbirds. This movement was also apparent in grey nomad mobility, but the strength of the longitudinal flow may not be as strong. The route choice and directional flow of grey nomads from each individual state is examined in the following sub-sections. Due to the small sample size of grey nomads from Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory (hereafter ACT), grey nomads from Tasmania will be incorporated into the movement patterns for Victoria and grey nomads from the ACT into New South

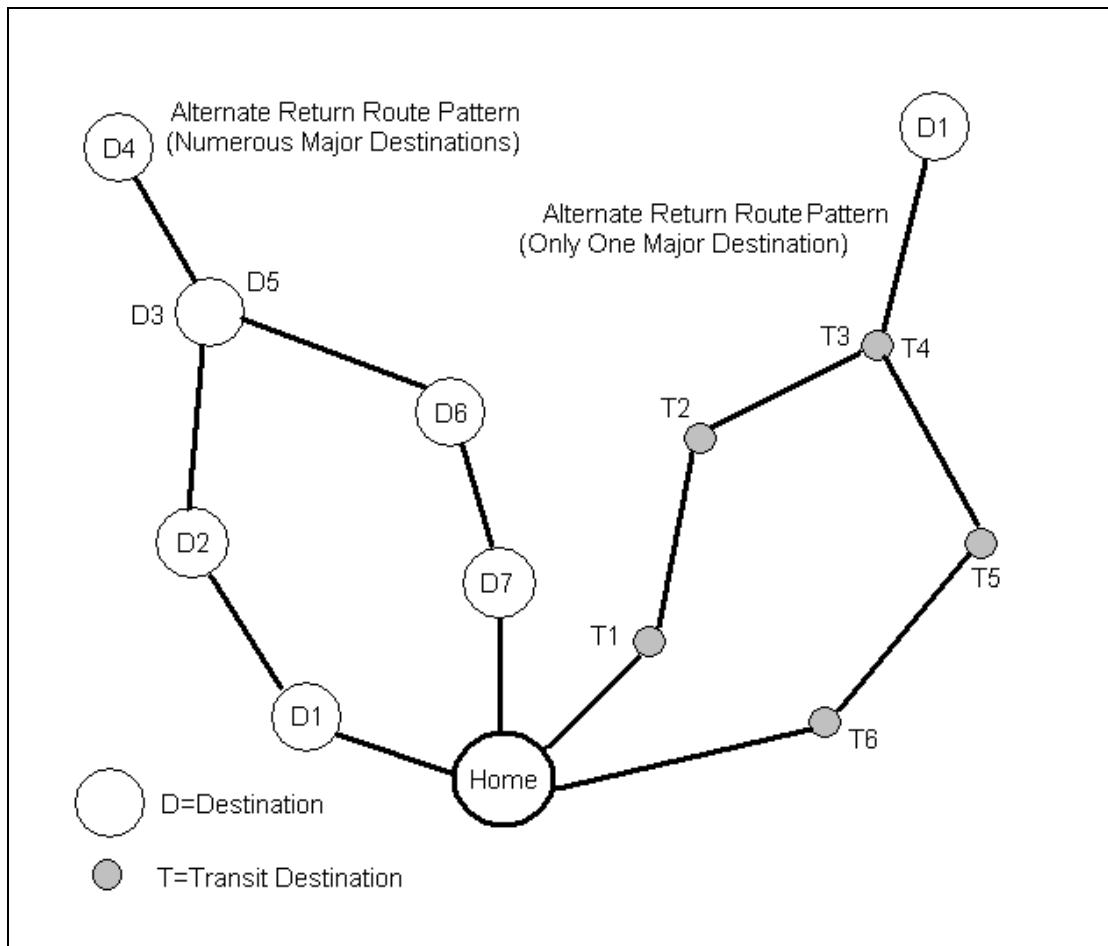


Figure 7.8. Typology indicating the two types of alternate return route pattern: one involving numerous destinations and one with a single main destination.  
(Source: created by Author)

Wales. Furthermore, grey nomads living a totally peripatetic lifestyle with no permanent residential address will not be discussed as their movement patterns and route choice had no identifiable pattern. To assist in routes and traffic flow identification, Figure 7.9 is a guide map highlighting major highways and traffic nodes.

### **7:8.1. Routes Utilised by Grey Nomads from Western Australia**

There were 164 grey nomad travel parties surveyed who had the usual place of residence in Western Australia. Grey nomads from Western Australia used four distinct route patterns during their winter movements. Two of these movement patterns were within Western Australia: one movement pattern is through Central Australia and another occurs when movement is directed towards the eastern states. These movement patterns have the characteristics of the ‘single destination pattern’ (n=64), ‘en route pattern’ (n=32) and ‘trip chaining pattern’ (n=36) proposed by Lue *et. al’s.* (1993). In addition, some surveyed Western Australian grey nomads travelled in an ‘alternate return route pattern’ (n=27). Six Western Australian grey nomads had not made a decision on their return routes at the time of surveying, so only their route to the destination where they were surveyed was included in this study. Figure 7.10 shows the highways utilised by the surveyed grey nomads from Western Australia and their various directional traffic flows.

Forty per cent of the surveyed grey nomads in Western Australia were residents of Western Australia (n=119). Another 39 per cent of surveyed grey nomads in Western Australia came from the eastern states: fifteen per cent from New South Wales; thirteen per cent from Victoria; and eleven per cent from Queensland. An analysis of the movement pattern of those grey nomads surveyed in Western Australia and who were residents of Western Australia showed that 70 per cent stayed in Western Australia for the entire winter. This high disparity in proportions suggests distance decay from the point of departure and may support the longitudinal movement hypothesis similar to that identified by Mings’ (1989) amongst North American snowbirds.

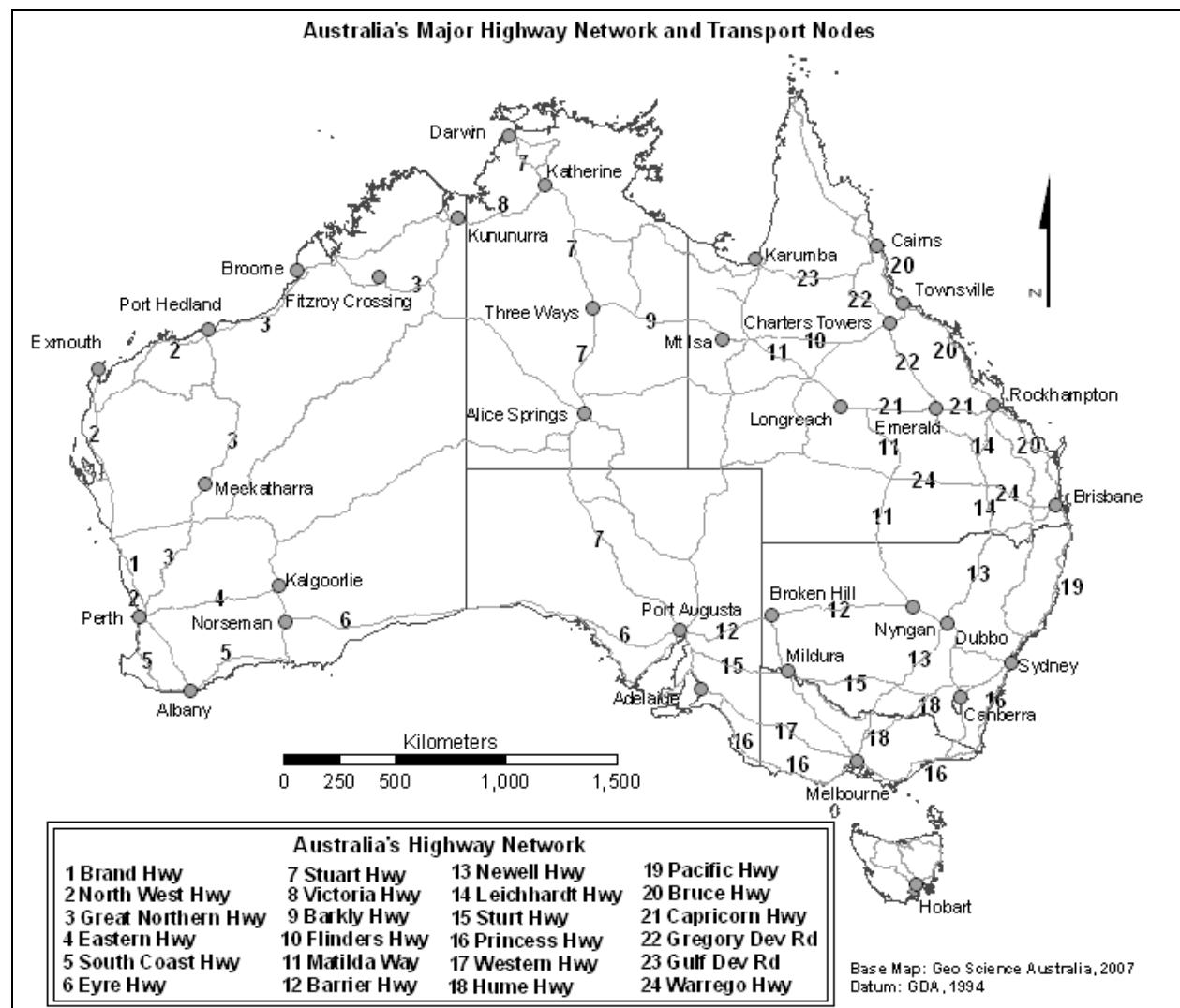


Figure 7.9. Australia's highway network and transport nodes.

Taplin and Qiu (1997) reported that a high proportion of self drive visitors to Western Australia were travelling in a circular pattern. This study confirmed such findings. The majority of the surveyed Western Australian grey nomads utilised the Brand Highway, North West Coastal Highway and the Great Northern Highway (north from the intersection of North West Coastal Highway and the Great Northern Highway just south of Port Hedland). Over 63 per cent of the Western Australian grey nomads travelled on these highways either on their journey north or as a return route (n=104). This result was also observed when grey nomads visited from other states and when Western Australian grey nomads left or returned to Western Australia. Moreover, less than 25 per cent of the surveyed Western Australian grey nomads who stayed solely in Western Australia travel on a different highway network on their trip north than their return route south (n=26). Over 66 per cent of movements occurred solely (both north and south movement) along the coastal highways where they considered the availability of services and infrastructure (e.g. place to stay) to be greater. Such a sentiment was echoed in this grey nomad's comment:

*"We rather stay on the coast. On the coast the cities are larger and there are more places to stay."* (Grey nomad, diary comments No. B12)

However, a small contingent of the surveyed Western Australian grey nomads who travel to destinations north of Port Hedland (e.g. Broome and Kununurra) do drive the Great Northern Highway on the inland section through Meekatharra and Newman. The bulk of these movements are 'single destination pattern' (57 per cent; n=37), complimented by some 'en route pattern' (43 per cent; n=28). This inland section of highway is considered quicker than the coastal route, a view evident in this grey nomad's response:

*"We travelled the coast road to get here. It is a little longer but we have the time and there are more places for us to stop.....When we leave here we just want to get home.....so we'll take the short inland road."* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. A54)

While the majority of the north-south movement in Western Australia is restricted to the west coast, some 'alternate return route pattern' was apparent amongst grey nomads travelling to a primary destination north of Port Hedland. These grey nomads travelling to their primary destination along the coastal highway return south via the southern inland section of the Great Northern Highway through

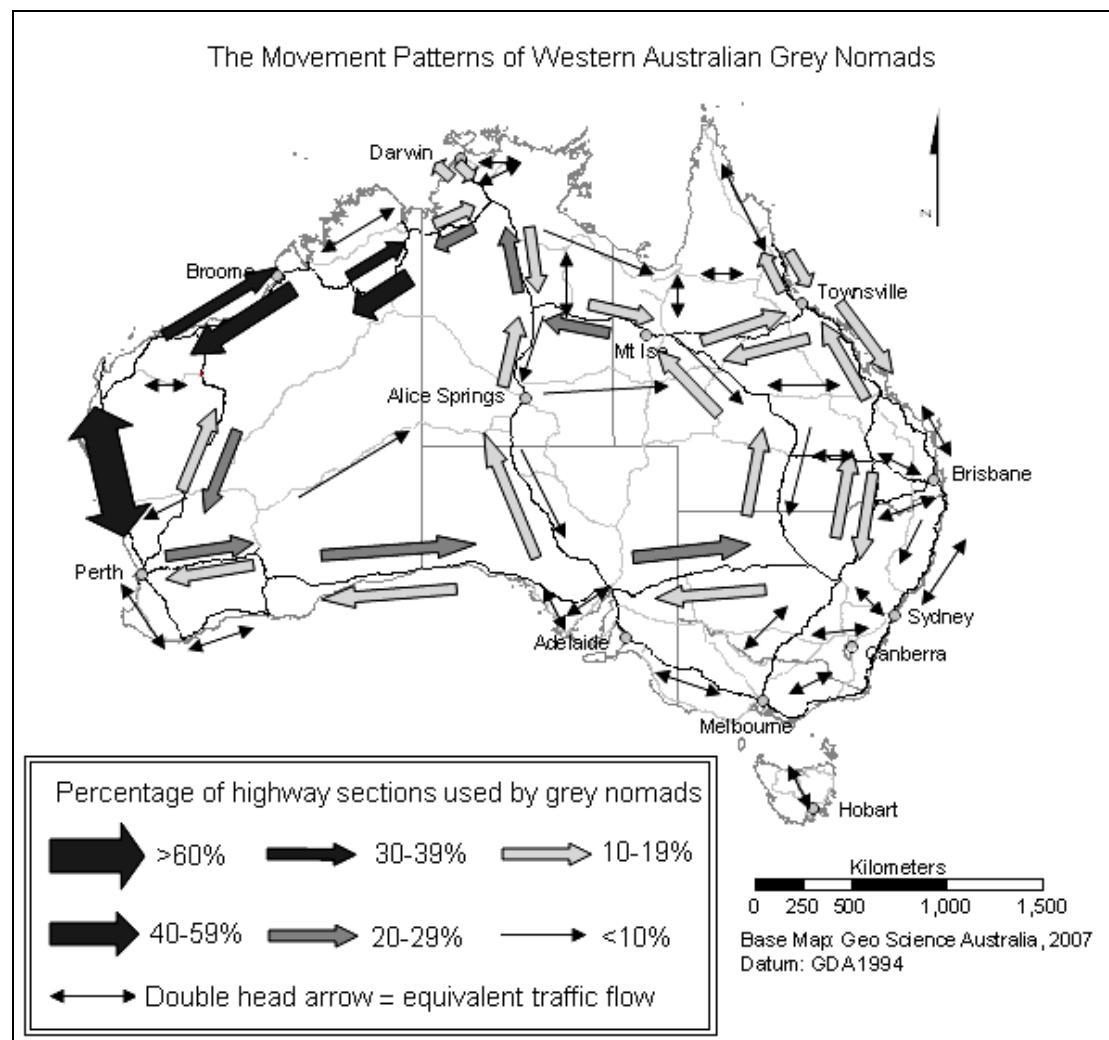


Figure 7.10. The percentage of traffic movement and directional flow of grey nomads from Western Australia.

Newman and Meekatharra. The majority of the movement along the southern inland section of the Great Northern Highway was in a southerly direction (23 per cent; n=31), rather than a north bound flow (17 per cent; n=28).

The other major flow of grey nomads from Western Australia was directed towards the eastern states. Most Western Australian grey nomads who visit other states and territories travelled in a circular route (i.e. trip chaining pattern). Approximately 30 per cent of the Western Australian grey nomads surveyed ventured out of Western Australia (n=45). The majority of this movement began in an eastward direction (61 per cent; n=28), rather than an initial movement north (39 per cent; n=17). Hence, the majority of the movement of Western Australian grey nomads out of Western Australia is in an anti-clockwise direction through the south of the state returning via the north. Travelling in this direction enables grey nomads to utilise the prevailing westerly winds across the Nullarbor Plain and the south east trade winds on the east coast. Travelling against the wind increases fuel consumption and travel time, especially during August and September, a time most grey nomads begin their journey home and when the strength of the westerly winds increases. Therefore, the choice of direction can be construed as a form of ‘climatic determinism’: a term developed to describe how prevailing climatic patterns dictates mobility. It could be argued that all grey nomad movement is associated with climatic determinism, as most grey nomads stated that they leave southern Australian for Northern Australia to escape the southern winter. However, the term is only linked to the reason for selecting a particular highway route. Evidence of climatic conditions dictating movement patterns was noted in the comment of one grey nomad from New South Wales visiting Western Australia:

*“We travel this way because it is easier [anti-clockwise]. Travelling the other way [clockwise] we have to drive against the wind and that affects fuel consumption and makes driving more difficult.....The wind can knock you back a whole gear.”* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 583)

A high proportion of Western Australian grey nomads who leave Western Australia do visit the eastern states (84 per cent of those who left Western Australia—32 per cent of the Western Australian grey nomads). Very few, however, visit or spend much time in southern New South Wales (mostly coastal), Victoria or

Tasmania. The reasons for this lack of visitation, especially amongst those who commence their trip in a predominantly easterly flow from Western Australia, were due to the time of visitation (early winter) and the strengthening desire to visit a warmer climate. Therefore, the majority of the flow, once in the eastern states, was directed northwards and not southward.

Most surveyed Western Australian grey nomads who left Western Australia preferred to spend their time in northern Queensland and the Northern Territory where the climate is notably warmer than the south eastern corner of Australia. For grey nomads travelling to the eastern states, the movement north usually begins at either Nyngan along the Mitchell and Landsborough Highways (i.e. Matilda Highway) to inland Queensland or at Dubbo along the Newell and Leichhardt Highways to Rockhampton and the coast. The movement west in Queensland for grey nomads travelling along the east coast usually commenced at Townsville and proceeded along the Flinders Highway. Very little movement occurred solely throughout inland Queensland, with movement eventually gravitating towards the east coast for grey nomads travelling in either direction. The return journey west for grey nomads travelling clockwise closely mimics the anti-clockwise flow. At Dubbo the majority of the flow continues along the Barrier Highway through Broken Hill and west along the Eyre Highway in Western Australia. Western Australian grey nomads travelling in a clockwise direction were more likely to visit destinations in the south eastern corner of Australia, as climatic conditions in the south east were warmer at the time of visitation.

Only sixteen per cent of the surveyed Western Australian grey nomads who ventured outside of Western Australia did not travel to eastern Australia, preferring to travel on the Stuart Highway through the Northern Territory and South Australia or vice versa. This fourth movement flow mostly occurs in an anti-clockwise direction: north bound through the Northern Territory and South Australia rather than south. Lue *et. al.* (1993) ‘trip chaining pattern’ typology describes the pattern of grey nomads travelling outside Western Australia, either through Central Australia or in the eastern states.

### 7:8.2. Routes Utilised by Grey Nomads from South Australia

There were 84 grey nomad travel parties from South Australia surveyed in this study. The surveyed grey nomads from South Australia utilised four main routes (see Figure 7.11). Their movement primarily takes the form of Lue *et. al's.* (1993) ‘single destination pattern’ (n=30), or ‘trip chaining pattern’ (n=33) and ‘alternate return route pattern’ (n=12). Very little movement of South Australian grey nomads took the form of ‘en route pattern’ (n=1), unlike the movement undertaken by their counterparts in Western Australia. Anecdotal evidence from the interviews suggested that the reason has to do with the geo-central location of South Australia, lack of en route attractions in Central Australia and the connectivity of highways networks. Five surveyed grey nomads from South Australia were still undecided on their return route at the time of surveying. The information they supplied was included in Figure 7.11, but only up to their survey location.

The bulk of the surveyed South Australian grey nomad movement went in a northerly direction along the Stuart Highway through Alice Springs and moved onward to Darwin (n=43). Approximately 32 per cent of the surveyed South Australian grey nomad movement north to Darwin was ‘single destination pattern’, where they spent the majority of the winter (n=27). Seventeen per cent of the surveyed South Australian grey nomads resided in the Darwin area, but returned home in an ‘alternate return route pattern’, primarily through inland Queensland (n=14). This movement through inland Queensland occurred along the Matilda Highway, then west on the Barrier or Sturt Highways to South Australia. Evidence of an ‘alternate return route pattern’ in South Australian grey nomads was highlighted in this comment:

*“We spent two months in Darwin.....Travelling home this way [via Queensland] just adds something different to the home journey..... We don't always go home this way but we had time and it just adds a little bit of variety.”* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 583)

A smaller secondary ‘single destination pattern’ in an eastward direction occurred into New South Wales either along the Barrier Highway through Broken Hill to Dubbo or the Sturt Highway through Mildura and Narrandera. At Dubbo and Narrandera the movement turned north onto the Newell and Leichhardt Highways into Queensland

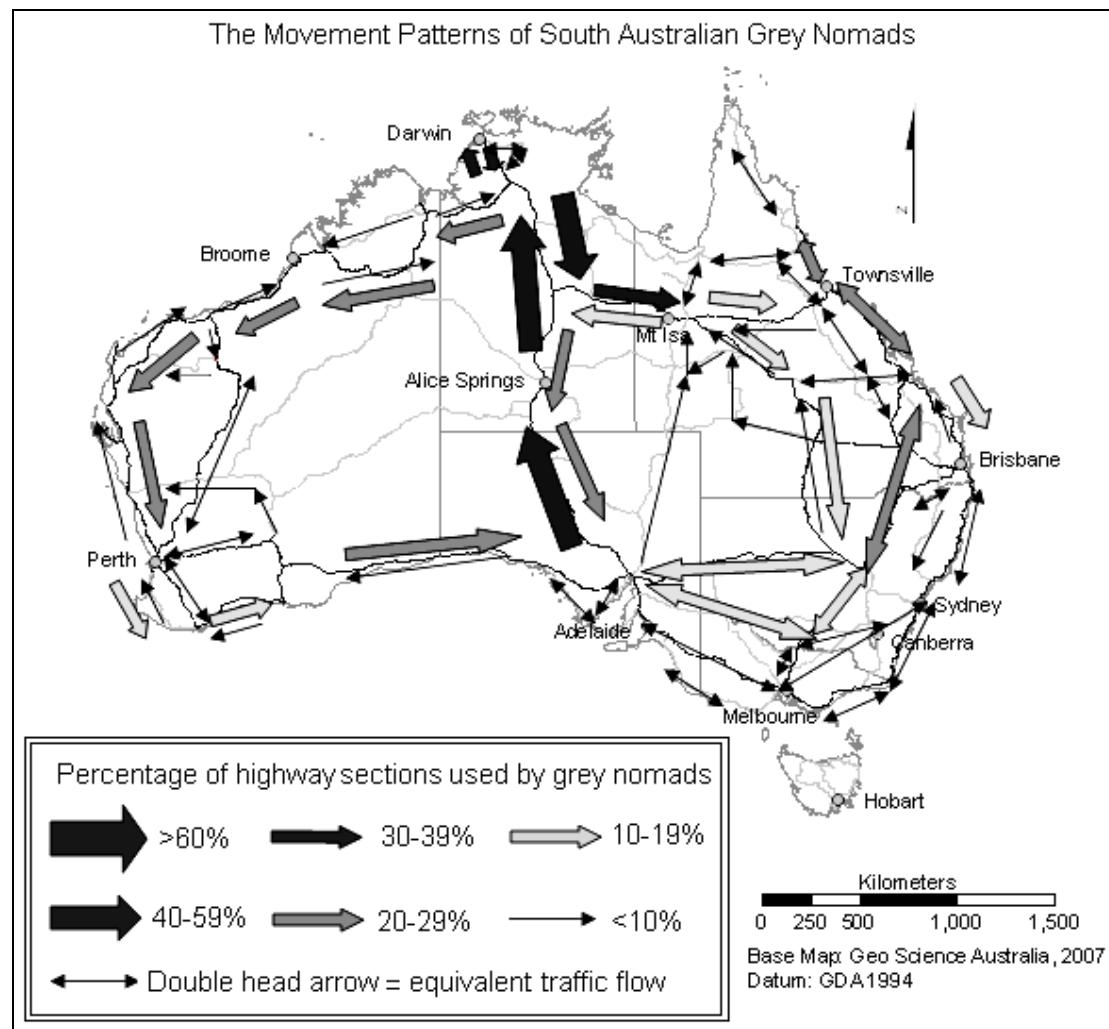


Figure 7.11. The percentage of traffic movement and directional flow of grey nomads from South Australia.

and destinations on the east coast. Some of the south movement is complimented by an ‘en route pattern’.

The surveyed South Australian grey nomads preferred to undertake two distinct ‘trip chaining patterns’ (n=25). Both routes followed the Stuart Highway north, dividing in either a westerly direction to Western Australia at Katherine (n=14) or easterly towards Queensland at Three Ways (n=11). The majority of the surveyed South Australian grey nomads moving into Western Australia do so in the north along the Victoria Highways to Kununurra. Less than ten per cent of the surveyed South Australian grey nomads entered Western Australia in the south along the Eyre Highway. The strong desire to arrive at a warm climate quickly and the westerly winds across the Nullarbor Plains inhibited movement in this direction; such a sentiment was evident in this South Australian’s comment:

*“Why head that way? We are leaving the cold to get to the warmth, and besides the hassle of driving against the westerlies [across the Nullarbor] just isn’t worth it. Although, it always seems that we are driving into a headwind..... It just suits us better going this way. When we final head south it will be starting to warm up. OK for us to spend some time there.”* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 451)

Most of the movement from the north was along the west coast of Western Australia, with very little inland movement, apart from the inland section of the great Northern Highway between Kununurra and Broome; an anti-clockwise flow. In addition, most surveyed South Australian grey nomads travelling in Western Australia also visited the South East corner of Western Australia via the coastal roads.

Those surveyed South Australian grey nomads visiting Queensland via the north travelled in a clockwise direction. Most movement of South Australian grey nomads in this direction gravitated towards the Queensland coast between Cairns and Rockhampton. At Rockhampton much of the movement goes inland along the Leichhardt and Newell Highways, returning to South Australia on either the Barrier or Sturt Highways (n=21). Very few of the surveyed South Australian grey nomads travelled along the east coast south of Brisbane (n=8). Similarly, very few of the surveyed South Australian grey nomads spent time in Victoria (n=5) and none visited Tasmania. The yearning to get home after a prolonged period away limits the desire

to visit these regions, and it is highly likely that many may have visited these states in the past.

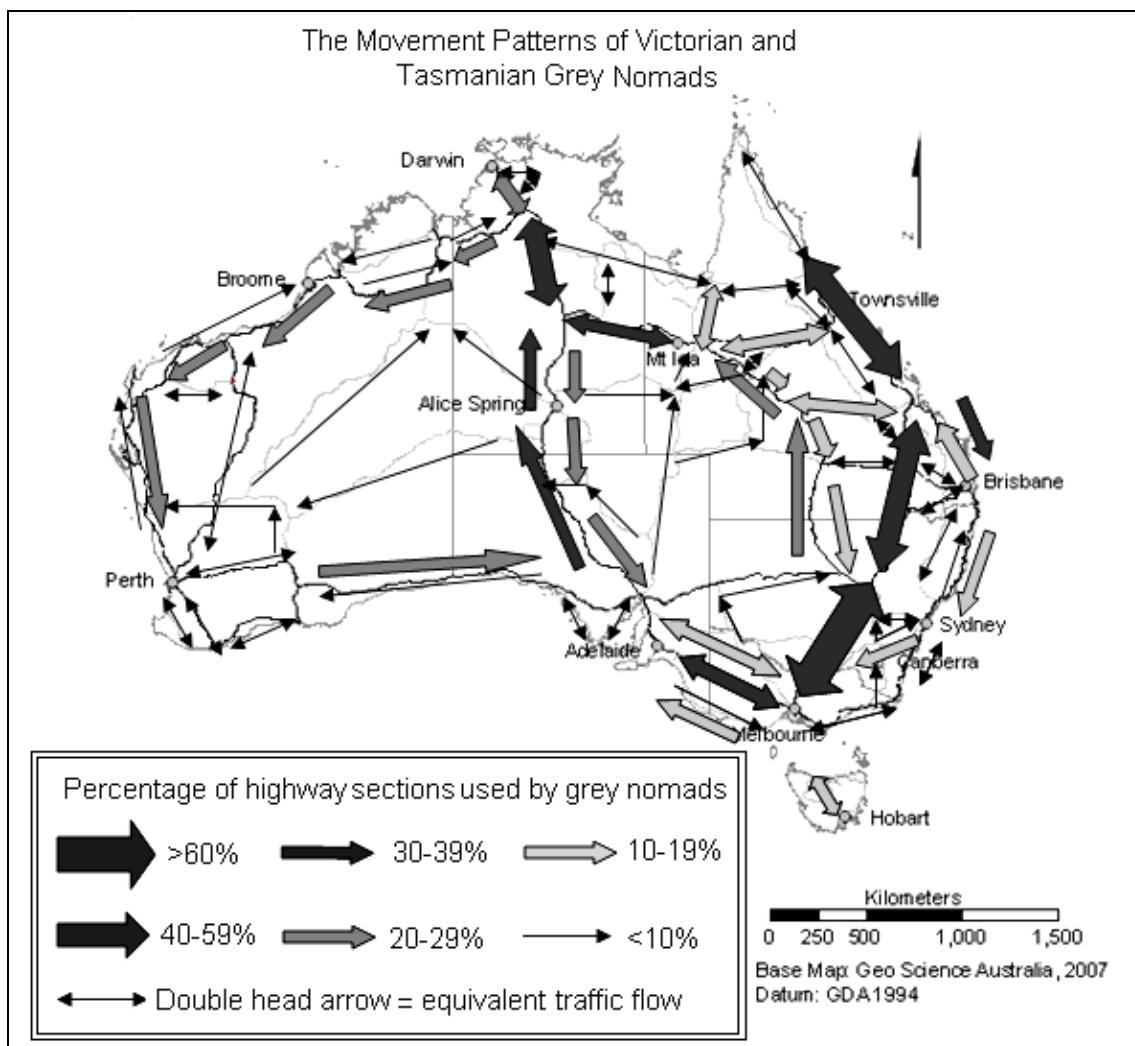
### **7:8.3. Routes Utilised by Grey Nomads from Victoria and Tasmania**

Victorian (n=223) and Tasmanian (n=38) grey nomads followed five distinct routes. Three of these routes involved the eastern states. Two of the routes involved movement through South Australia and the Northern Territory, with one route heading west into northern Western Australia and the other towards North Queensland (see Figure 7.12). Twenty-three of the surveyed grey nomads who were from Victoria and Tasmania were, at the time of surveying, undecided regarding their return route. They were omitted from the return route analysis.

Most of the surveyed grey nomads from Victoria and Tasmania moved in a northerly direction along the Hume Freeway and Valley Highways towards the Newell Highway. At Dubbo, the bulk of movement (45 per cent, n=105) continued north along the Newell Highway and onto Rockhampton via the Leichhardt Highway. Once at Rockhampton, the flow continued northward along the Bruce Highway. A high proportion of this flow was ‘single destination pattern’, complemented with an ‘en route pattern’: returning south on the same route. This movement is the fastest and direct route to coastal areas of northern Queensland for grey nomads from Victoria and Tasmania, as suggested in this grey nomad’s comment:

*“We come to Bowen every year.....The easiest way and most direct is straight up the middle of New South Wales to Rocky then to here. It generally takes us a week to drive from Victoria.....about the same to return home.”* (Grey nomad, No. 32)

The remaining flow of Victorian and Tasmanian grey nomads to inland Queensland turned north-west at Dubbo and entered Queensland via the Matilda Highway (n=68). This movement was characterised as ‘regional tour route pattern’, with movement eventually directed towards the east coast either at Longreach or Mt Isa, and then south along the east coast to Rockhampton. The return movement followed the Leichhardt and Newell highways and reconnected with the same route



*Figure 7.12. The percentage of traffic movement and directional flow of grey nomads from Victoria and Tasmania.*

taken north. Approximately 55 per cent of surveyed grey nomads from Victoria and Tasmania travelling this route did so in this direction (n=66). A few Victorian grey nomads travelling this inland route to Karumba, on the Gulf of Carpentaria, did so in a ‘single destination pattern’.

The movement of surveyed grey nomads from Victoria and Tasmania west through South Australia, then north into the Northern Territory (not including those venturing to Western Australia) had two flows patterns: ‘single destination pattern’ (n=15) and ‘alternate return route pattern’ (n=35). Some ‘trip chaining pattern’ also occurred through the Northern Territory, Queensland and New South Wales. The ‘single destination pattern’ comprised those surveyed grey nomads who spent the entire winter at Darwin and surrounding area. This pattern was favoured by 42 per cent of grey nomads from Tasmania (n=18). In addition, some of the surveyed grey nomads from South Australia travelled in an ‘alternate return route pattern’. This movement started with a directional flow north through South Australia and on to the Northern Territory. The return route travels through Queensland and New South Wales, generally via the Matilda Highway to Dubbo, and then south to Victoria. For these grey nomads, the majority of movement through Queensland was primarily inland, although some movement was observed towards Townsville, and then south to Rockhampton. Once at Rockhampton this coastal movement was directed inland towards the Leichhardt and Newell Highways. The majority of grey nomads returning from the Northern Territory via inland Queensland spent most of their time away at a primary destination in the Northern Territory and were returning home via an alternate route. Those grey nomads who moved towards the coast, generally travelled in a ‘trip chaining pattern’.

The ‘trip chaining pattern’ flow primarily occurred towards the west in an anti-clockwise direction: across northern Western Australia, and then south down the west coast (n=37). Once at Perth, the flow either continued along the coast or headed east towards Kalgoorlie. Both flows reconnected at Norseman and continued eastward across the Nullarbor Plains and back to Victoria and Tasmania. Little grey nomad movement from the east entered Western Australia in the south of the state and travelled in a clockwise direction to the northern portion of the state. Only seven

Victorian and one Tasmanian grey nomad stated that they were travelling both the east coast and west coast on the same trip.

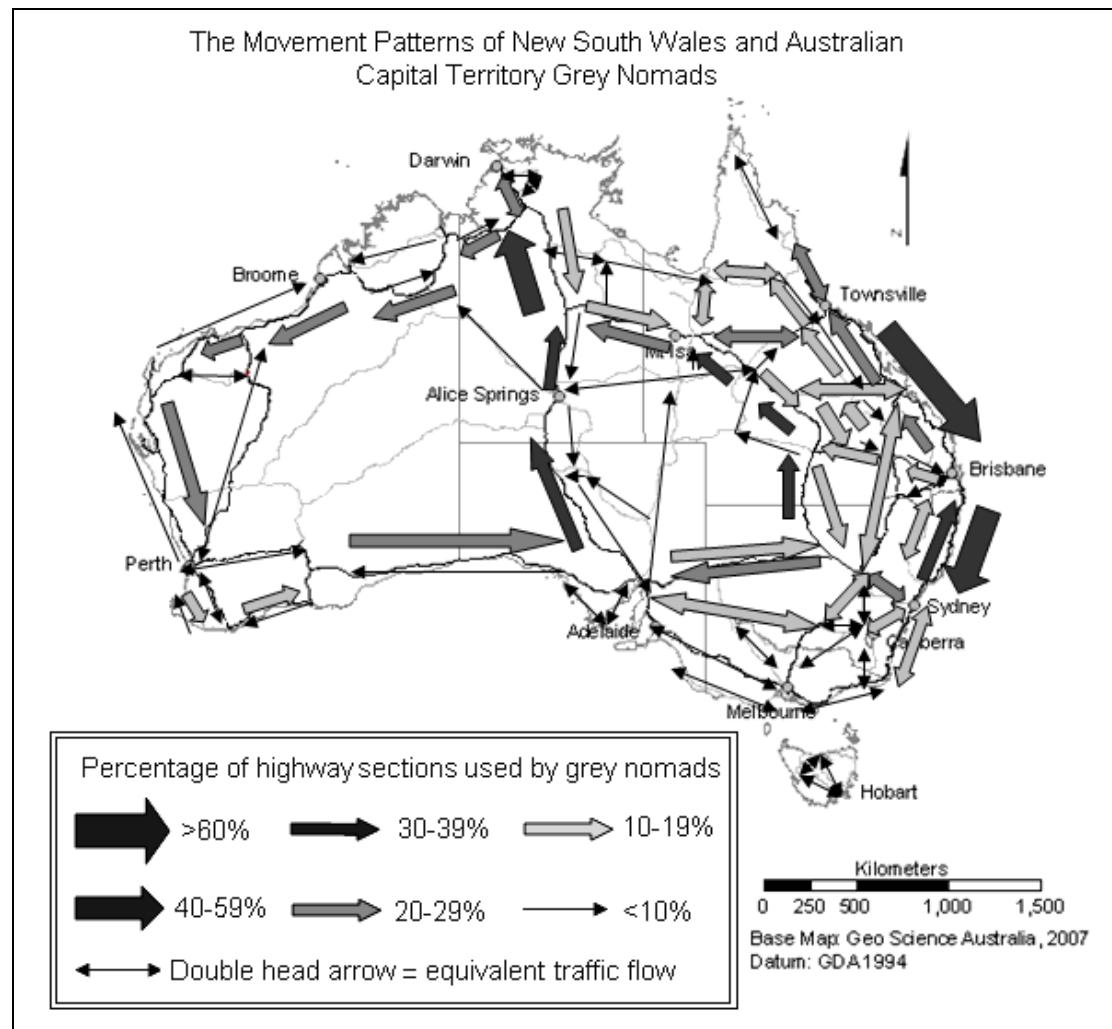
#### **7:8.4. Routes Utilised by Grey Nomads from New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory (ACT)**

Six distinct traffic flow patterns existed amongst the surveyed grey nomads from New South Wales (n=193) and the Australian Capital Territory (hereafter ACT; n=13). Three of the six movements involved travelling solely in Queensland and New South Wales. The other three involved a more western movement (see Figure 7.13). Eighteen surveyed grey nomads from New South Wales and the ACT at the time of surveying were unsure of their return route; hence, their return route could not be analysed.

The first route followed the Pacific and Bruce Highways solely (movement both north and return south), hugging the east coast of Queensland and northern New South Wales. Approximately 55 per cent of this movement along the coast was consistent with Lue *et. al's.* (1993) ‘single destination pattern’ (n=25). These grey nomads resided at one coastal location for the majority of their trip. Their time in transit is generally minimal as the emphasis is on getting to their destination and not sightseeing while travelling. This comment by a New South Wales grey nomad travelling typified most grey nomads who travel to a single destination for the winter:

*“It takes us about a week to drive from Sydney to here [Mission Beach].....We have seen most of the sights along the coast and have no interest in sightseeing now. We just want to get up here, relax and meet our friends.....It takes us about the same amount of time to travel home as it does to get here.”* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 22)

A further 45 per cent of movement north solely along the Bruce and Pacific Highways was ‘en route pattern’ (n=15). This type of movement was similar in direction to ‘single destination pattern’, but much slower, as no one destination was the focus of their travel. Rather they will prefer to visit and stay a few days to a week, at numerous destinations on one highway network. Evidence of such movement was highlighted in this grey nomad’s comment:



*Figure 7.13. The percentage of traffic movement and directional flow of grey nomads from New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.*

*“We are just sticking to the coast this trip. We haven’t been up here before, so we are just taking our time. What we miss on the way up, we’ll try and see on the way home. And there is so much to see. It seems that everyone I talk to, tells us of another place we just have to see.”* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 43)

The second route mimics Lue *et. al’s.* (1993) ‘trip chaining pattern’(n=50). The majority of this movement occurred in an anti-clockwise direction (65 per cent) through inland Queensland and then towards the coast. These grey nomads primarily moved along the Matilda Highway, but some travelled along the Newell and Leichhardt, and then they deviated west at Rockhampton going along the Capricorn Highway until it connects with the Matilda Highway. Smaller numbers of grey nomads travelled north through Emerald and Charters Towers along the Gregory Development Road to North Queensland. The flow of grey nomads along the Matilda Highway continued north until Cloncurry/Mt Isa, where they either continued north towards Karumba then east towards Cairns, or east along the Flinders Highway towards Townsville. Grey nomads travelling this pattern return home via the coast along the Bruce and Pacific Highways. Thirty-five per cent of the surveyed grey nomads from New South Wales and the ACT adopted this pattern of movement travel in the opposite direction, visiting coastal destinations before visiting destinations in inland Queensland.

The third type of flow was best described as a ‘regional tour pattern’ (n=37). These grey nomads travelled north along the Pacific Highway to Brisbane or on the Bruce Highway to Rockhampton. The flow of grey nomads from Brisbane then turns west and travels along the Warrego Highway to the Matilda Highway (approximately 35 per cent of this movement). The Rockhampton flow of grey nomads turns west along the Capricorn Highway, until it also connected to the Matilda Highway (20 per cent). Both these movements of grey nomads then mimic the movement patterns of the second traffic flow: movement towards the coast at Cloncurry/Mt Isa and a return in a southerly direction along the east coast. Forty-five per cent of grey nomads travelling this pattern do so in reverse, visiting North and Far North Queensland before heading inland.

The fourth traffic flow has a similar movement as the ‘alternate return route pattern’(n=28). Movement generally started in a westerly direction towards South Australia along the Barrier Highway or Sturt Highway, then north along the Stuart Highway, with most of the grey nomads travelling to Darwin. Once at Darwin, these grey nomads returned south, but turned east at Three Ways in the Northern Territory along the Barkly Highway into Queensland. Once in Queensland, these grey nomads either returned home via the inland route (Matilda Highway) or via the Bruce and Pacific Highways along the coast. However, this flow of grey nomads differs from the ‘alternate return route pattern’ undertaken by the majority of the surveyed grey nomads from Victoria/Tasmania, Western Australia and South Australia, insofar as that there was a clear lack of a primary destination. For the surveyed grey nomads from New South Wales and the ACT, Darwin was not their primary destination. Their choice of destination is more characterised by ‘trip chaining pattern’, where no single destination was chosen and the emphasis was on visiting a variety of different locations.

The fifth and sixth flow patterns involved movement of grey nomads towards Western Australia. The fifth movement of grey nomads was a ‘trip chaining pattern’ (n=35) and the sixth was a ‘regional tour pattern’ (n=15; Lue *et. al.*, 1993). However, the ‘regional tour pattern’ covered an area which included South Australia, the Northern Territory and Western Australia, a size larger than Lue *et. al.* (1993) theorised in their multi-destination route typology. The movement of the surveyed grey nomads from New South Wales and the ACT toward Western Australia commenced in either two directions. Some grey nomads moved north through inland Queensland (i.e. ‘trip chaining pattern’) solely along the Matilda Highway, or along the Leichhardt and Warrego Highways before connecting to the Matilda Highway at either Charleville or Augathella. Both movements then entered the Northern Territory via the Barkly Highway. The second movement occurred towards the west through western New South Wales into South Australia then north to the Northern Territory (i.e. ‘regional pattern’). At Katherine, these grey nomads (if not visiting Darwin and the Top End) headed west along the Victoria Highway towards Kununurra in Western Australia and continued across to Broome and along the west coast of Western

Australia. Grey nomads travelling this pattern returned to New South Wales via the Eyre Highway then either the Barrier or Sturt Highways.

### **7:8.5. Routes Utilised by Grey Nomads from Queensland**

The 147 grey nomad travel parties from Queensland displayed Lue *et. al's.* (1993) ‘single destination’ (n=35), ‘en route’ (n=42) and ‘trip chaining’ patterns (n=55) mobility patterns, with some ‘alternate return route pattern’ (n=15). Surveyed grey nomads from Queensland followed four main routes: two within Queensland; one to the Northern Territory; and the one into Western Australia (see Figure 7.14). At the time of surveying, five grey nomads from Queensland were undecided on the route they would take on their return journey, so only the routes actually taken on this trip were included on the analysis.

One of the movements of surveyed grey nomads from Queensland occurred solely along the east coast on the Bruce Highway. This flow of Queensland grey nomads took the form primarily of a ‘single destination pattern’, but complemented by some ‘en route pattern’. For grey nomads travelling to one primary destination, movement along the Bruce Highway was generally quick, with them taking less than a week to arrive at their chosen destinations. In comparison, grey nomads travelling an ‘en route pattern’ along the Bruce Highway moved slowly in a north and south direction visiting a variety of destinations. Both these movements were identical to that undertaken by grey nomads from New South Wales who solely travelled the coastal route to northern Queensland and highlighted by the two quotes on pages 224 and 226.

A second type of traffic flow of the grey nomads from Queensland was a ‘trip chaining pattern’ within Queensland. Most of this movement commenced in the south east corner of Queensland and was directed in a westerly direction along the Warrego Highway towards the Matilda Highway. The movement continued through western Queensland towards Cloncurry/Mt Isa, where the movement then divided, with some grey nomads either continuing north to Karumba and onwards to the east

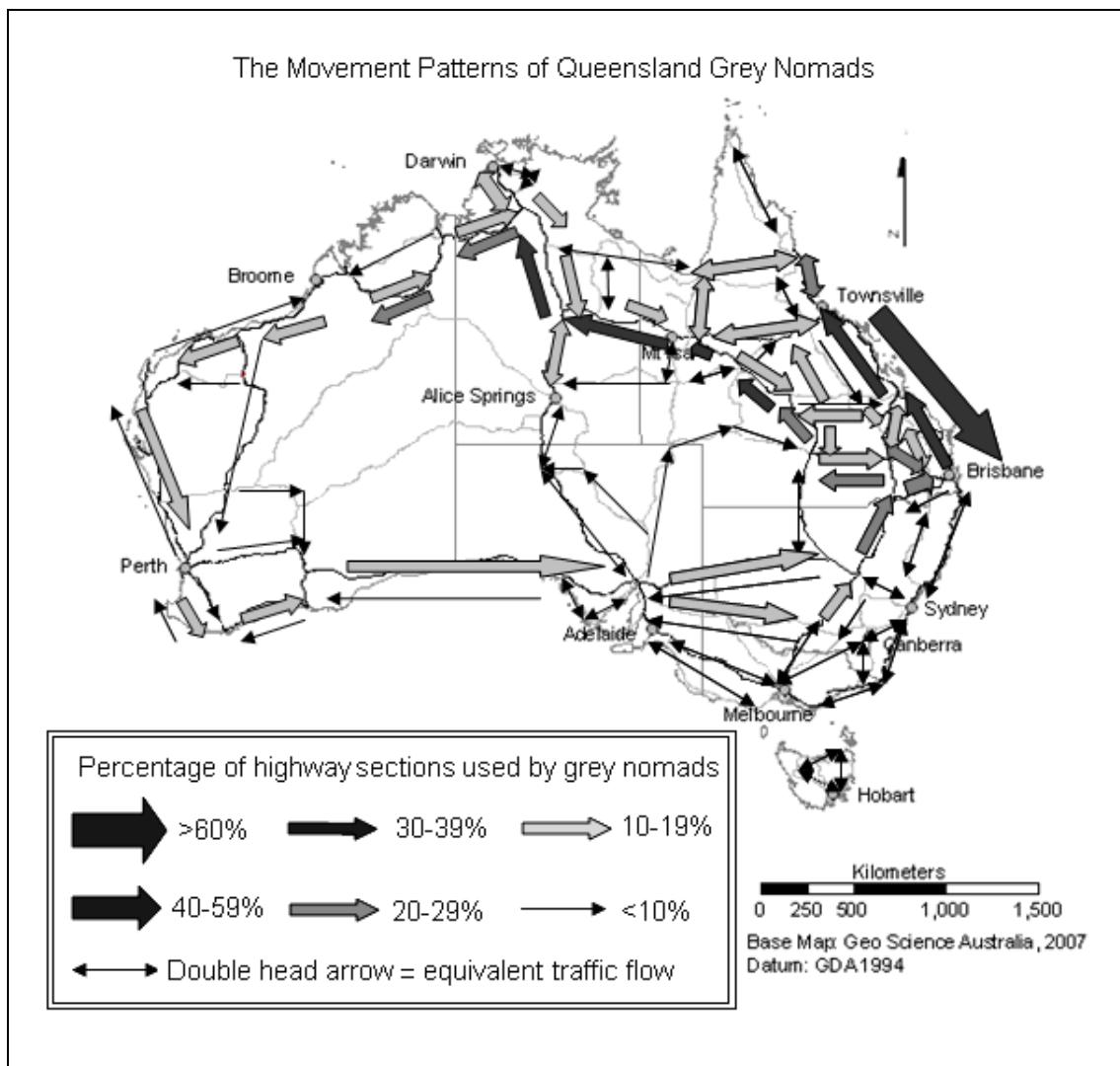


Figure 7.14. The percentage of traffic movement and directional flow of grey nomads from Queensland.

coast along the Gulf Development Road or in an easterly direction towards Townsville on the Flinders Highway. Movement on the east coast was generally in a southerly direction along the Bruce Highway. Approximately 62 per cent of the surveyed grey nomads from Queensland moved in this direction (anti-clockwise); the remainder travelled in the opposite direction (clockwise).

The third type of movement of the surveyed grey nomads from Queensland was towards the Northern Territory, and was ‘single destination pattern’ and ‘en route pattern’, with some ‘alternate return route pattern’, according to Lue *et. al.*s. (1993) typology. The ‘alternate return route pattern’ was generally multi-destination in character, with no single destination choice. The majority of movement was similar to the second traffic flow, insofar that the grey nomads travelled along the Warrego Highway and the Matilda Way to Mt Isa. At Mt Isa, the flow of grey nomads continued in a westerly direction along the Barkly Highway to Three Ways and then North to Darwin. A small contingent (less than three per cent) of surveyed Queensland grey nomads, instead of continuing to Darwin, headed west at Katherine along the Victoria and Great Northern Highways to Broome in Western Australia. For these grey nomads, Broome was their primary destination. This pattern was the only noted single destination movement of surveyed grey nomads from the eastern states in Western Australia. Approximately 35 per cent of the surveyed Queensland grey nomads who travelled to a single destination returned home via an alternative route. This movement generally gravitated towards the coast before heading south to their usual residence. The remainder travelled home via the same route they took on the journey to their destination. Almost ten per cent of the surveyed Queensland grey nomads who travelled to the Northern Territory (with no intention of visiting Western Australia) and who visited numerous destinations (not single destination focus), utilised a different route to return home when in Queensland (‘alternate route return pattern’).

The fourth route followed by the surveyed grey nomads from Queensland was a ‘trip chaining pattern’, involving movement through Western Queensland, Northern Territory and around Western Australia. Less than ten per cent of the surveyed Queensland grey nomads entered Western Australia along the Eyre Highway and

travelled in a clockwise direction. The majority of these grey nomads moved westwards along the Warrego Highway and the Matilda Highway to Mt Isa. However, some of these grey nomads travelled in a northerly direction along the Bruce Highway and then deviated west at Rockhampton. Some of these grey nomads also veered west at Townsville and Cairns, but the volume of westerly movement from these centres was notably smaller than the numbers observed moving west at Rockhampton. The movement of these surveyed grey nomads in Western Australia was concentrated on the coastal highways, both north and south of Perth. The return journey was then east along the Eyre Highway through South Australia. The movement divided in South Australia, with approximately 45 per cent of these surveyed grey nomads travelling on the Barrier Highway, and 41 per cent travelling on the Sturt Highway. Both flows of these grey nomads returned to Queensland on the Newell Highway.

Very few of the surveyed grey nomads from Queensland visited Victoria, Tasmania and the eastern seaboard of New South Wales on their journey. The initial movement of the majority of surveyed Queensland grey nomads was in a northerly or north-west direction. Very little southerly movement was identified due to the climatic conditions southern Australia experienced at the time of departure. Furthermore, grey nomads returning home from Western Australia via South Australia and New South Wales, visited very few destinations in southern Australia, other than for the purpose of resting. The length of time exploring other areas and the attraction of heading home may limit visitation to this region of Australia. Very little movement occurred through Central Australia south of Alice Springs/Uluru. For Queensland grey nomads, access to Central Australia was easier and quicker via Mt Isa and Tennant Creek. The time of visitation to Central Australia, usually during the middle of winter, may inhibit further southern movement.

## **7:9. Conclusion**

The discussion in this chapter considered the mobility patterns of grey nomads. Characteristics that were examined included the length of a grey nomad's trip, length of stay at a destination, kilometres travelled in a day (en route and whilst

at a destination), planning/motivation, the type of vehicle driven and highway networks travelled. As a population, grey nomads are extremely mobile and visit a wide range of destinations and travel a variety of routes. The average length of a grey nomad's trip was approximately three to four months. The length of time they spent at a destination varied from over night stays to the entire winter. Grey nomads generally only covered 300 km to 400 km in a day when travelling between destinations. Furthermore, once at a destination most grey nomads only travelled approximately 50 km a day.

Grey nomads also travelled in a diverse array of vehicles. The majority travelled with a caravan with most being towed by a large to medium size model four wheel drive vehicle, followed by grey nomads in motor homes, camper trailers and campervans. In addition, the analysis considered the directional traffic flow of grey nomads in relation to the state where they commenced their travel. An analysis of the directional movement of the grey nomads surveyed identified that route patterns can vary between grey nomads from different states. Grey nomads surveyed in this study travel primarily in either Lue *et. al's.* (1993) 'single destination pattern', 'en route pattern', 'regional tour pattern' or 'trip chaining pattern'. However, a fifth type of movement pattern - named 'alternate route return pattern' - was also identified.

The high proportion of grey nomads from Western Australia who only stay in Western Australia for the winter and the high number of surveyed grey nomads travel parties from the eastern states that only visit Queensland, as their primary destination, may support Mings' (1989) longitudinal theory in movement. Similarly, there was also high number of grey nomad travel parties surveyed that have their permanent residence in South Australia that travelled to the Northern Territory, as their primary destination of choice. This finding may further support a longitudinal theory in movement patterns. Furthermore, the prevailing climatic conditions of a region can also dictate the direction that grey nomads will choose to travel. Most movement of the surveyed grey nomads occurred in an anti-clockwise direction, when possible. Travelling in this direction permitted grey nomads to keep prevailing winds to the rear making for economical and easier travelling. The following chapter will analyse how the socio-economic and demographic differences of surveyed grey nomads and the destinations they visit may influence their movement patterns.

## **Chapter Eight**

## **Grey Nomad Mobility Part 2**

### **8:1. Introduction**

The analysis in the previous chapter considered some of the basic overall characteristics of grey nomad mobility. In this chapter, the discussion will shift and focus upon the differences in mobility within the grey nomad population. Factors that can influence a grey nomad's mobility are diverse, ranging from socio-economic/demographic reasons to the number of past trips they have taken and their level of travel experience. Rarely does one factor solely influence a grey nomad's movement pattern. Usually there are a number of interwoven characteristics that creates an environment that will alter a grey nomad's mobility. For example, a grey nomad's age and/or the length of time they have been retired may dictate how many past trips they have undertaken. Moreover, with every additional trip a grey nomad undertakes, their knowledge of what activities, amenities and services available at a particular destination may increase, which in turn might alter future movement patterns. In addition, their level of disposable income (i.e. travel budget) could be a contributing factor to their choice of accommodation type. These characteristics may determine a grey nomad's length of stay at a particular destination, the routes and the activities they undertake and their movement patterns once at a destination.

In this chapter, a number of mobility variables such as length of trip, length of stay, kilometres travelled both en route and at a destination were tested against selected socio-economic/demographic characteristics like age, retirement income and pre-retirement employment. Furthermore, various other mobility and trip characteristics variables such as preferred mode of transport, type of accommodation preferred and activities undertaken were also tested for differences. These variables were chosen for testing as observations during field studies showed that these characteristics varied between particular groups of grey nomads.

## 8:2. Factors Influencing the Length of a Grey Nomad's Trip

In this section, selected grey nomad characteristics were tested to identify which factors influenced a grey nomad's length of trip. The characteristic variables tested were mean age of grey nomads per vehicle, the length of time spent in retirement, state of origin, type of retirement income, number of past trips, preference for caravan park or camping accommodation and mode of transport (e.g. caravanning, motor home). Table 8.1 explains the reason behind selecting these variables for testing.

*Table 8.1. How selected variables may influence a grey nomad's length of trip.*

Tested Variable	Influence on a grey nomad's length of trip
Mean age per vehicle	Frailty relating to age; health issues/death of a partner; less disposable income; having visited numerous destinations and the desire to travel wanes
Length of retirement	Closely related to age. May determine the number of past trips. Less of a desire to explore.
State of origin	Grey nomads from the southern states like Tasmania and Victoria need to travel further than grey nomads from Queensland and northern New South Wales. In addition, early winter conditions may promote early departure.
Type of retirement income	People with higher incomes can stay away longer.
Number of past trips	As the number of trips increase there maybe less of a need to visit large numbers of destinations.
Camping Vs Caravan Parks	Caravan parks provide greater comfort than camping areas. The money saved by camping may help to extend length of trip.
Mode of transport	Different types of transportation have different comfort levels.

Two major factors influenced the length of a grey nomad's trip: differences between grey nomads who were camping and those who preferred to stay in caravan parks; and the mode of transport (i.e. caravan, motor home, campervan, camper trailer). Grey nomads travelling longer than twelve months and those who lived a permanent peripatetic lifestyle were excluded from this examination because their movement patterns were continuous and they were unable to provide an estimated time for completion of their current trip. Kruskal-Wallis tests showed that socio-economic and demographic characteristics like mean age per vehicle, length of

retirement, state of origin and type of retirement funding had very little influence on determining a grey nomad's length of trip (See Table 8.2). In addition, the number of past trips also had no influence over a grey nomad's length of journey. The reason that many of these factors were not significant could be related to climatic conditions. Many grey nomads stated the weather as being a major factor for undertaking such trips. Most grey nomads started their trips at the end of May or the beginning of June, which coincides with a time of colder weather in southern Australia. The majority unusually completed their journey in September/October when southern Australia is experiencing warming weather. Having been away for a number of months, combined with the knowledge that southern Australia is experiencing warmer weather, may see the desire to stay away weaken and the yearning to be with family and friends strengthen. Evidence of how the warming in southern Australia can influence a grey nomad's date to return home is highlighted in this grey nomad's comment:

*"Two years ago we decided.....to leave early and return home in late August. Oh the complaints from my wife, [upon our return that] it was too cold - well let's just say that we won't be doing that again. We'll stay away till it gets warmer."* (Grey nomad, No. 1)

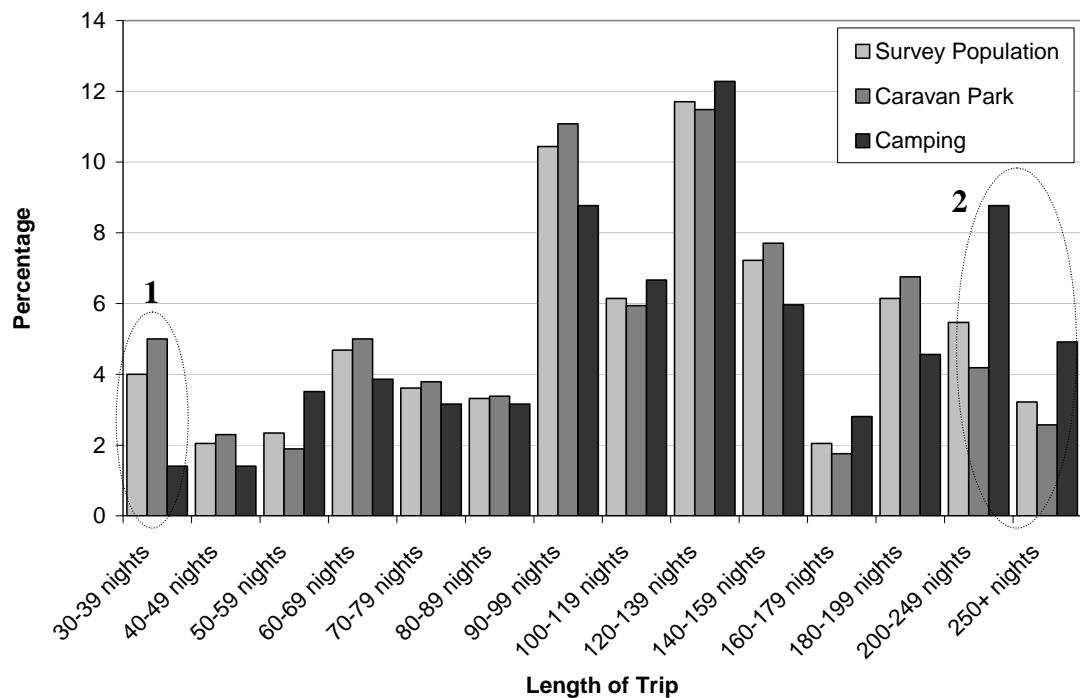
Other possible reasons for these variables not reporting a significant difference is presented in Table 8.2.

*Table 8.2. Results of the Kruskal-Wallis test on grey nomad characteristic that influenced a grey nomad's length of trip.*

Tested Variable	$\chi^2$	df	P-value	Possible Reason Why Variable Had not Statistical Significance
Mean age of grey nomads per vehicle	8.361	6	.213	The mobility of older grey nomads will slow with age. They will visit fewer destinations and stay longer at those destination than younger grey nomads
Length of retirement	6.196	8	.625	As above
Number of past trips	4.476	7	.724	As above
State of origin	1.192	6	.977	Grey nomads from southern states tend to traverse southern Australia in a few weeks to arrive at a warmer climate.
Type of retirement funding	6.830	3	.078	The cost of travel could be offset by camping
Mode of transport	23.112	3	<.001	NA

The average length of the journey of surveyed grey nomads was 126 nights. However, the grey nomads who preferred to camp had an average journey length of 141 nights (median=120 nights,  $\sigma=93.32369$ ), whereas the grey nomads residing in caravan parks spent an average of 121 nights away from their usual place of residence (median=109 nights,  $\sigma=72.83541$ ). A Mann-Whitney test showed that a significant difference existed ( $U=47031.500$ ,  $P\text{-value} = .004$ ) between the length of a trip undertaken by grey nomads who camp and those who prefer to stay in caravan parks. The majority of the differences can be seen in Figure 8.1, where grey nomads who have short trips (30-39 nights; indicated by the number 1 on Figure 8.1) tend to stay in caravan parks and those who camp have longer trips ( $>200$  nights; number 2 on Figure 8.1). The difference in length of journey was closely aligned to economic factors. Grey nomads who camp generally spend approximately \$20.00 less per day. Camping permits grey nomads to offset the cost of staying in caravan parks, thereby extending their travel budget and allowing for longer trips.

A grey nomad's mode of transport will influence the length of their trip. A Kruskal-Wallis test identified that a significant difference existed between the length of a grey nomad's trip and their mode of transport (see Table 8.2). Grey nomads travelling with a camper trailers/tents tended to be away for the shortest length of time (average=88 nights; median=90 nights). Grey nomads travelling with caravans (average=129 nights; median=120 nights), motor homes (average=134 nights; median 120 nights) and campervans (average=114 nights; median=98 nights) have notably longer trips. A Mann-Whitney test showed that the length of a grey nomad's trip with a camper trailer/tent was significantly shorter to those who towed a caravan or drove a motor home ( $U=10275.000$ ,  $U=1244.500$  respectively; both  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ ). No difference existed between grey nomads travelling with campervans and those with camper trailer/tents ( $U=354.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.405$ ). Camper trailers/tents and campervans often lack the same level of creature comforts compared to motor homes and caravans. This factor may contribute to the shortening of the length of a trip amongst those driving campervans and towing camper trailers.



*Figure 8.1. The proportion of grey nomads surveyed classified according to their length of trip and accommodation choice: caravan parks or camping grounds. The figure one indicates a high proportion of caravan park stays. The figure two indicates significantly high levels of camping (n=905).*

### 8:3. Factors Influencing the Length of a Grey Nomad's Stay at their Surveyed Destination

The analysis in this section identified variables which influenced a grey nomad's length of stay at a particular destination. Variables tested included mean age per vehicle, length of retirement, state of origin, type of retirement funding, number of past trips, kilometres travelled in a day at a destination and en route to a destination, mode of transport (e.g. caravanning, motor home) and destination type. Table 8.3 contains an explanation of the reasons for these variables being selected for testing.

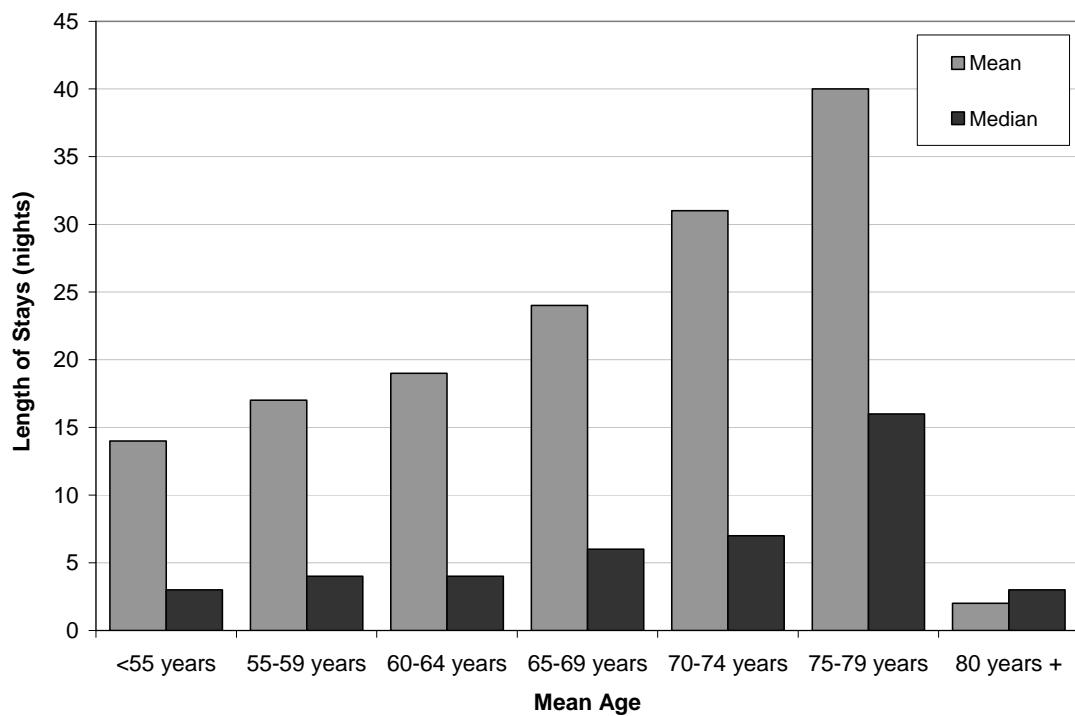
A number of factors influenced a grey nomad's length of stay at a particular destination. A Kruskal-Wallis test reported a significant difference in relation to the mean age of surveyed grey nomads per vehicle and their length of stay at a particular surveyed destination ( $\chi^2=31.207$ , df=6, P-value=<.001). As a grey nomad ages, their average and median length of stay at a destination increased (see Figure 8.2). This increase in a grey nomad's length of stay at a destination gradually continues until the age of 79 years. The mobility amongst grey nomads who are aged 80 years and over tends to decline sharply. However, the small sample size of grey nomads 80 years and over (n=7) may have biased this result. Yet, on the other hand, the absence of over eighty year old grey nomads does suggest that there were fewer very elderly grey nomads travelling. The trend towards increasing lengths of stays with age is understandable. Older grey nomads have taken more past journeys than younger grey nomads (Spearman's Correlation Coefficient=.550; Sig=<.001). Younger grey nomads eagerly visit as many destinations as possible on their first and second trips. Older grey nomads, having visited numerous destinations, will be more selective in their destination choice. Greater selectivity may favour longer stays at preferred destinations. Hence, the need and desire to visit numerous destinations declines amongst the older more well travelled grey nomads. Such a conclusion is highlighted in this grey nomad's comment:

*"We've been coming north every year and have seen and visited some amazing places. We know north Queensland very well. When we first started we travelled all over but now that we have seen almost everything of interest we go away to just get away and have become very selective of where we stay"* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 85).

The above comment also suggests that the motivation to travel differs with age and that for some grey nomads the importance of a destination is over shadowed by the desire to “*just get away*” (Grey nomad, No. 1).

*Table 8.3. How selected variables influenced a grey nomad’s length of stay.*

<b>Tested Variable</b>	<b>How may this variable influences a grey nomad’s length of stay</b>
Mean age of grey nomads per vehicle	Frailty relating to age. Preference to stay at fewer destinations.
Length of retirement	Closely related to age.
State of origin	Western Australian grey nomads visiting northern Western Australia have fewer choices of destinations than grey nomads from the eastern state and staying in the east. This may result in longer stays at preferred destinations.
Type of retirement funding	People with higher incomes can stay longer.
Number of past trips	As the number of trips increase there maybe less of a need to visit large numbers of destinations.
Camping Vs Caravan Parks	Caravan parks provide greater level of amenities than camping areas. The money saved by camping may help to extend the length of their trip.
Mode of transport	Different types of transportation have different comfort levels: set up time.
Kilometres travelled in a day to arrive at a destination	Grey nomads who stay at one primary destination for the winter may travel greater distances in a day to arrive at that destination. Grey nomads who visit numerous destinations may travel less kilometres in a day whilst in transit.
Kilometres travelled in a day once at a destination	Longer duration stays may lead to slower mobility at a destination as attractions can be visited at later dates in the stay. Hence, this may lead to increase days spent relaxing at the camp area/caravan park.
Destination types	The different landscapes/environment/geography and amenities provided by a destination may influence a grey nomad’s length of stay.



*Figure 8.2. The mean age of the occupants per vehicle of the surveyed grey nomads and the average and median length of stay at their place of surveying.*

Since age and length of time in retirement is closely aligned (Spearman's Correlation Coefficient .585; Sig=<.001), it is not surprising that the length of time a grey nomad has been in retirement will influence how long they would stay at a particular destination. Results from a Kruskal-Wallis test indicated that there was a significant difference in the length of stay and duration of retirement ( $\chi^2=64.861$ , df=8, P-value=<.001). Figure 8.3 highlights differences between grey nomads retired for one to five years with those grey nomads the retired for six years or more. Grey nomads retired five years or less have shorter stays at their surveyed destination than those grey nomads who have been retired for a longer period.

A significant difference existed between the length of a grey nomad's stay at their surveyed location and the number of past trips they had made since retiring (Kruskal-Wallis test:  $\chi^2=183.398$ , df=7, P-value=<.001). A positive correlation existed between a grey nomad's length of stay at a destination and the number of past journeys they had undertaken since retiring (Spearman's Correlation Coefficient .414; Sig=<.001). Whilst the correlation result was weak, it did show a strong significance. This relationship suggested that some grey nomads repeatedly visited particular destinations and as the number of trips undertaken by grey nomads increased, the average length of stay at a destination also increased (see Figure 8.4).

A Kruskal-Wallis test identified that a significant difference existed between the amount of kilometres a surveyed grey nomad travelled in a day to arrive at a destination and their length of stay at that destination (Kruskal-Wallis test:  $\chi^2=87.563$ , df=9, P-value=<.001). A weak positive correlation also existed between a grey nomad's length of stay and the distance they travelled to arrive at a destination (Spearman's Correlation Coefficient .253; Sig=<.001). Results in Figure 8.5 indicated that for grey nomads who stayed at a particular destination for a period of 30 nights or less, the distance they travelled in a day to arrive at their destination remained consistent (approximately 300-325 km). For grey nomads who have stays longer than 30 nights, the amount of kilometres they are willing to drive in a day whilst en route increased with the length of their intended stay (approximately 400-450 km). These grey nomads have one main focus whilst en route: to arrive at their chosen

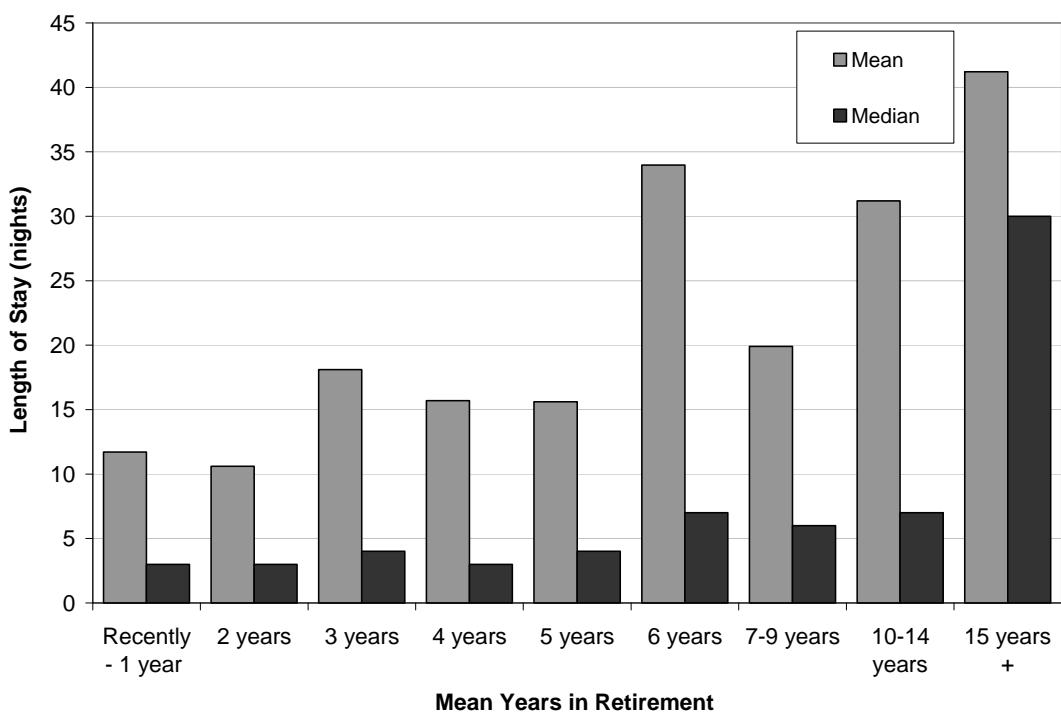


Figure 8.3. The mean length of a grey nomad's retirement (the mean per travel party per vehicle) and the mean and median length of stay at their surveyed destination.

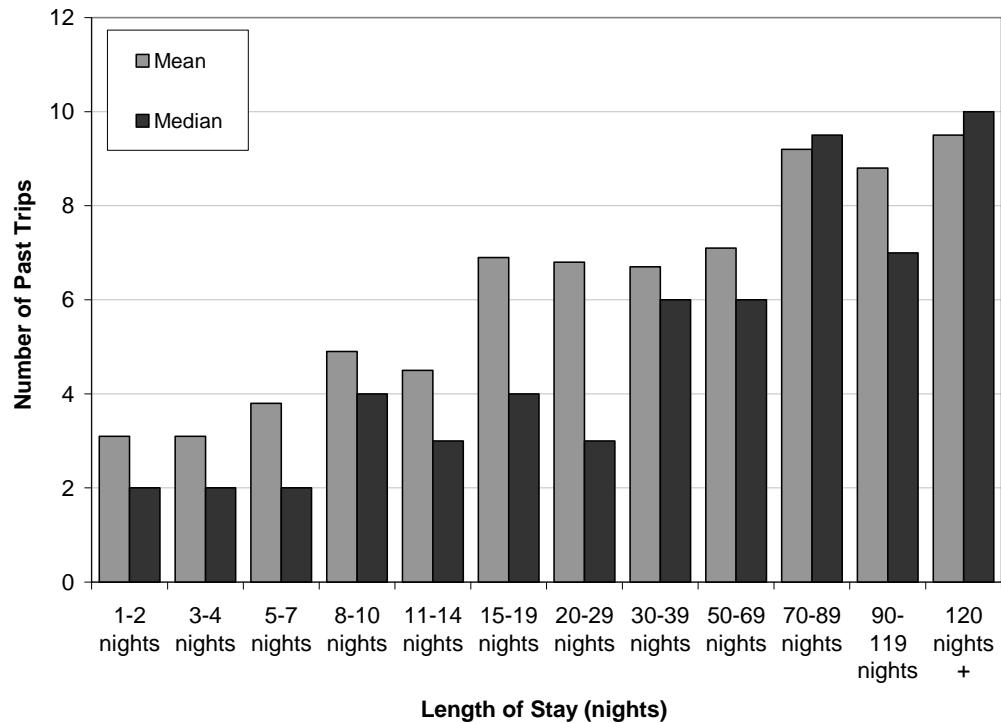


Figure 8.4. The average number of trips a surveyed grey nomad has undertaken since retiring and its relationship with length of stay at a destination.

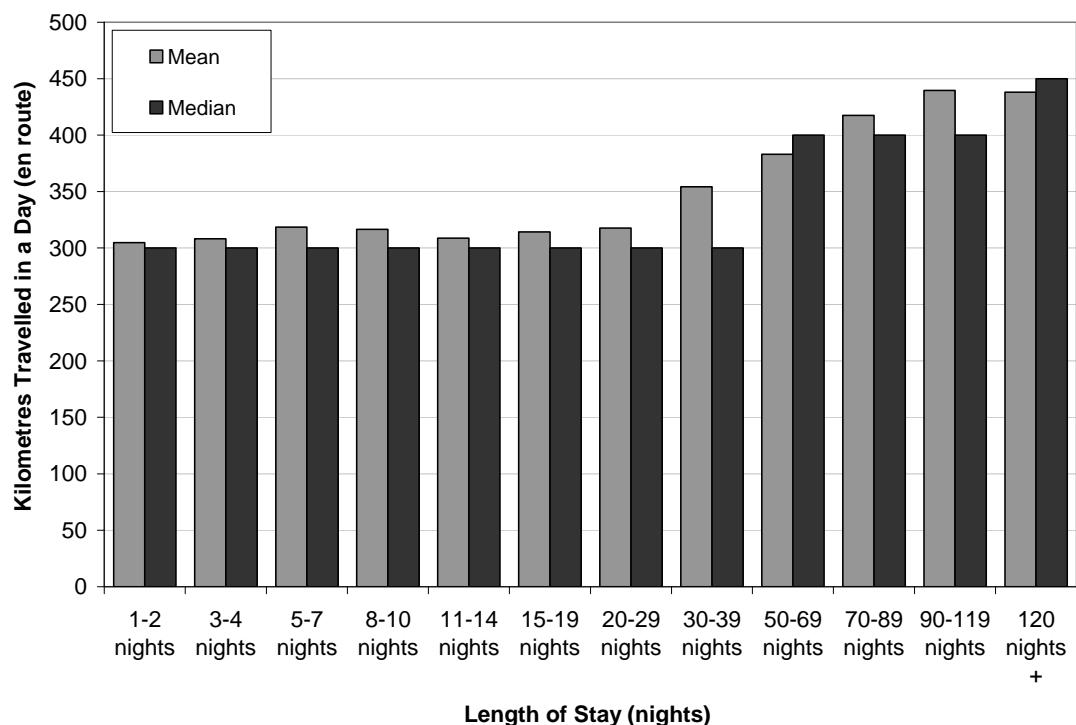


Figure 8.5. The length of a surveyed grey nomad's stay at a destination and the number of kilometres travelled, on average, to arrive at their preferred destination.

destinations and they are not interested in sightseeing whilst in transit. Thus, the distances they drive tend to be greater than those grey nomads who have shorter stays and wish to visit numerous destinations.

Grey nomad mobility at a destination differed in relation to their length of stay. The Kruskal-Wallis test identified a significant difference between the length of a grey nomad's stay at a destination and the amount of kilometres they travelled in a day once at a destination ( $\chi^2=57.080$ , df=7, P-value=<.001). A small negative correlation existed in a grey nomad's length of stay and the amount of kilometres they travelled in a day (Spearman's Correlation Coefficient -.203; Sig=<.001). The longer a surveyed grey nomad spent at a destination, the higher the tendency was for them to travel fewer kilometres on average at that destination (see Figure 8.6). This result is not surprising as grey nomads who have lengthy stays at a particular destination have the opportunity to take 'lazy days', which are days spent relaxing within or around their caravan or motor home.

A statistical difference also existed between the length of stay by grey nomads from Western Australia and those from the eastern states (Kruskal-Wallis test:  $\chi^2=47.727$ , df=2, P-value=<.001). A Mann-Whitney test identified that the surveyed grey nomads from Western Australia had longer stays at their preferred destination than grey nomads from other states. Their longer lengths of stay was significantly different compared to grey nomads from Tasmania (U=1772.000), Victoria (U=12660.500), South Australia (U=4770.000), New South Wales (U=11071.500) and Queensland (U=7389.000; all have P-value=<.001). Surveyed grey nomads from the ACT were the only grey nomads from the eastern states who had no statistical difference in their length of stay compared to grey nomads from Western Australia (U=830.000, P-value=.214). This result could be related to the number of grey nomads from Western Australia and the ACT who travel to a single (primary) destination and spend the entire winter at that location. Destinations in Western Australia are widely dispersed and fewer in number compared to the number of destinations in Queensland, especially along the coast. The lack of destinations to choose from and the greater distances between destinations in Western Australia

appears to be conducive to longer stays for Western Australian grey nomads staying with their home state.

The type of vehicle a grey nomad travelled with/in can dictate their length of stay at a destination. The Kruskal-Wallis test reported a significant difference between grey nomads and their mode of transport and their length of stay at a destination ( $\chi^2=33.343$ , df=3, P-value=<.001). Table 8.4 shows the results of the Mann-Whitney tests on the different forms of transport and length of stay. The only significant difference existed between grey nomads in caravans and those travelling in campervans or towing camper trailers/tents. Surveyed grey nomads in caravans tended to have the longest stays, with an average stay of 25 nights (median= 7 nights). Grey nomads in motor homes had an average length of stay at a destination of 14 nights (median=4 nights), campervans 7.2 nights (median=2 nights) and camper trailers/tents 4.9 nights (median=3 nights). Caravans are designed to be self contained, towed to a destination and left in situ. These characteristics are more conducive to lengthy stays compared to stays undertaken by grey nomads travelling in motor homes and campervans, given that both these types of vehicles are generally the principal mode of transport and accommodation. Movement in motor homes and campervans requires constant packing and repacking, even for short day trips, inhibiting lengthy stays. Furthermore, camper trailers are designed for camping in remote locations. A high proportion of grey nomads with camper trailer/tents (66 per cent) were surveyed in remote locations. Grey nomads visiting remote locations tended to have shortened lengths of stays, compared to other types of destinations.

The type of destination a surveyed grey nomad visited would dictate their length of stay. A significant difference existed between the type of destination and length of stay (Kruskal-Wallis:  $\chi^2=259.940$ , df=9, P-value=<.001). Grey nomads who visited coastal destinations and tourist centres (all located on the coast: e.g. Cairns, Port Douglas, Airlie Beach, or Exmouth) favoured longer lengths of stay (26-50 nights) (see Figure 8.7). These destinations have well established services and facilities and are considered to have aesthetically pleasing environments. Hence, grey nomads who camped on the coast favoured lengthy stays compared to those who preferred to camp inland. Inland towns and centres tended to be more transient

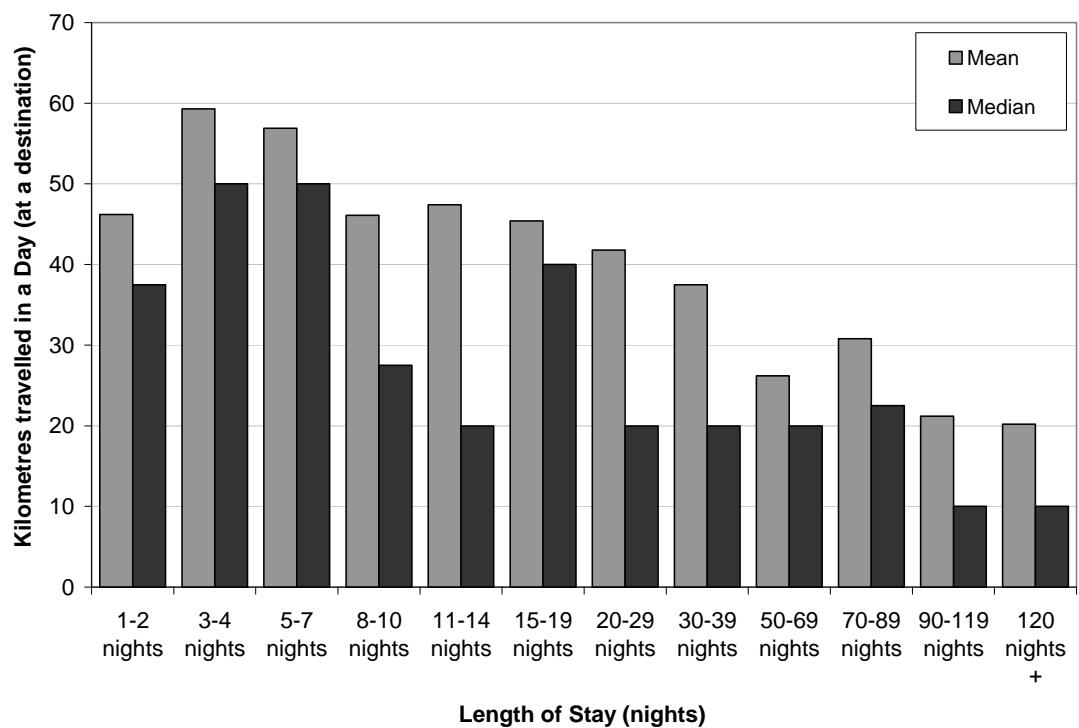


Figure 8.6. The length of a surveyed grey nomad's stay at a destination and the estimated amount of kilometres travelled once at their preferred destination.

Table 8.4. Results of the Mann-Whitney test indicating the significant differences in the mode of a grey nomad's transport and the length of stay per vehicle type.

Sig.	Motor Home	Caravan	Camper Trailer/Tent	Campervan
<b>Motor Home</b>	Sig=1.000			
<b>Caravan</b>	Sig=.004 U=36527.000	Sig=1.000		
<b>Camper Trailer/Tent</b>	Sig=.023 U=2334.000	Sig=<.001 U=14641.000	Sig=1.000	
<b>Campervan</b>	Sig=.017 U=790.000	Sig=.001 U=3943.000	Sig=.175 U=466.000	Sig=1.000

locations, only attracting grey nomads for short periods. Stays of more than two weeks were common for surveyed grey nomads at remote and inland camping destinations with facilities. Lengthy stays at some inland destinations were associated with the type of activities undertaken at that destination. Grey nomads who enjoy fossicking, for example, will tend to seek out destinations renowned for their prospecting of gem stones and gold. The analysis of grey nomads visiting remote locations generally covered a region (e.g. the Kimberley, Cape York Peninsula) rather than one single destination, which may have biased the data relevant to remote stays. In addition, the longer length of stays for grey nomads camping at an inland location with facilities can be directly associated with country events like the Boulia Camel Races. Grey nomads started arriving a week prior to the commencement of the event and many stayed for a week afterwards.

The type of a grey nomad's retirement funding influenced their length of stay at a destination (Kruskal-Wallis test:  $\chi^2=16.023$ , df=3, P-value=.001). A Mann-Whitney test was performed on the different types of retirement funding. A significant statistical difference existed between the length of stay for grey nomads on a pension and those grey nomads who are self-funded ( $U=66755.000$ , P-value=.001). In addition, a statistical difference also existed between self-funded grey nomads and those on a part pension ( $U=27035.500$ , P-value=.012). Grey nomads on either a full or part pension tended to have longer stays at particular destinations than those who are self-funded or on long service leave (see Figure 8.8). The extremely short length of stays by grey nomads on long service leave, identified in Figure 8.8, could relate to the desire to visit as many destinations as possible during their time on leave, before returning to work. Furthermore, the cost of travelling was identified in section 5.11.9 as being more expensive than staying at a destination. Grey nomads on a part or full pension tended not to be as financially secure as those who are self-funded, having a lower disposable income. Additionally, grey nomads on a part or full pension also tended to be slightly older than grey nomads who are self-funded. Due to their older demographics they may not have benefited from compulsory superannuation schemes compared to younger grey nomads. These factors can influence a grey nomad's length of stay.

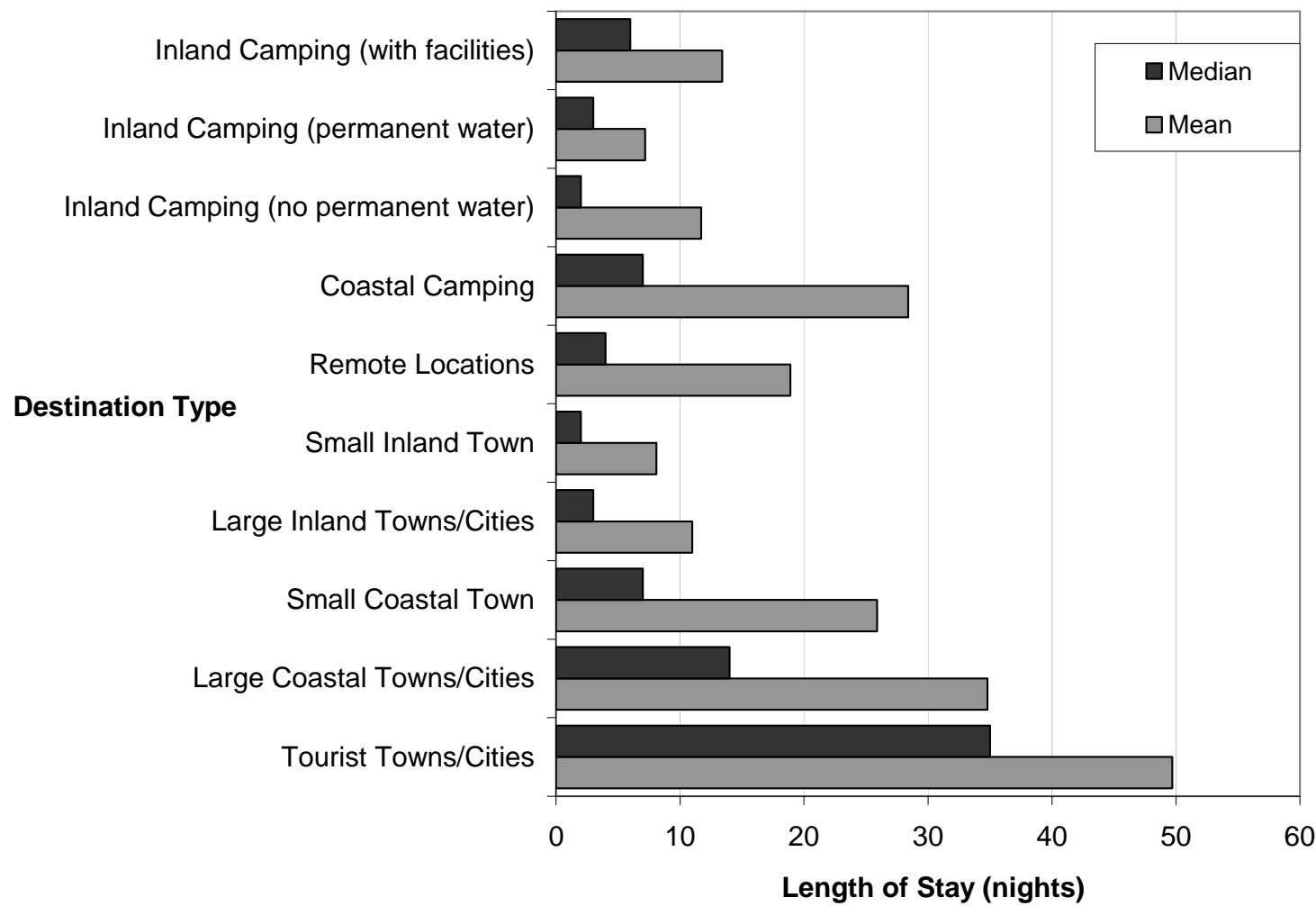


Figure 8.7. The average length of a grey nomad's stay at different destination types.

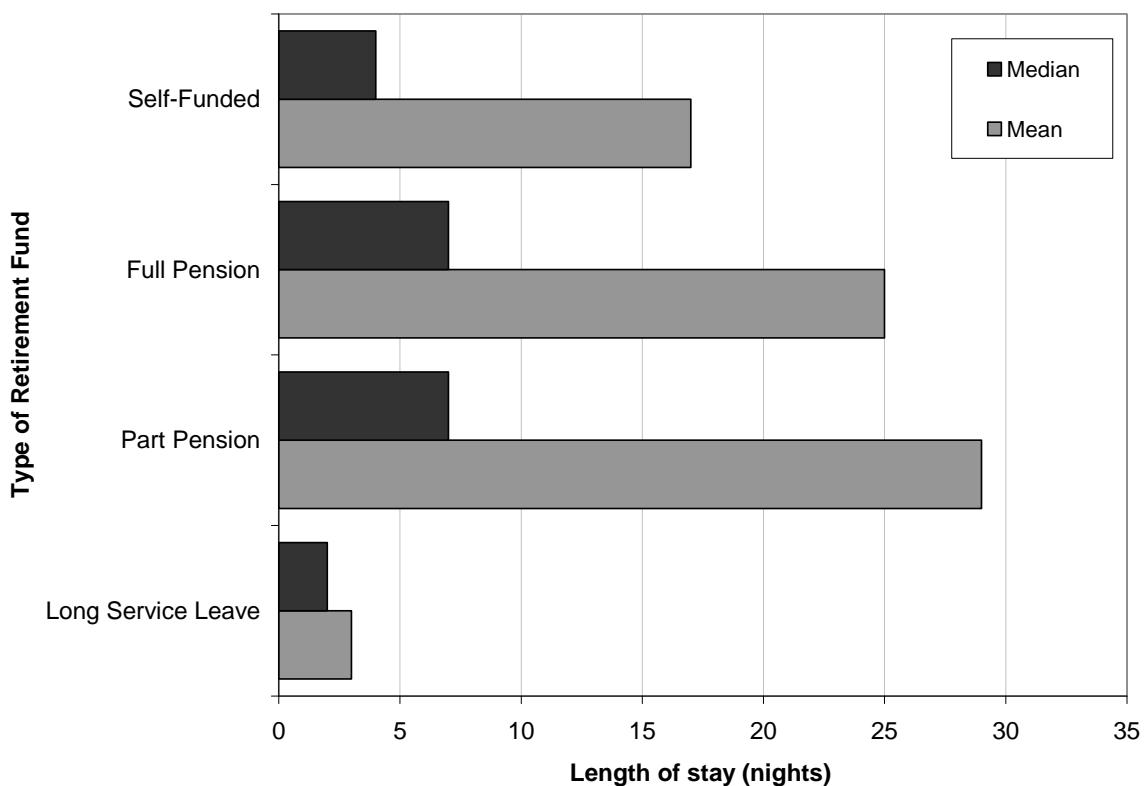


Figure 8.8. The type of a grey nomad's retirement fund and its association with their length of stay at a surveyed destination. (n= 945)

The type of primary activities a grey nomad undertakes at a destination can influence their mobility. A Kruskal-Wallis test identified that a significant difference existed between the type of activity a grey nomad undertakes and their length of stay ( $\chi^2=50.681$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ ). Some destinations like Karumba or Sapphire/Rubyvale are renowned for one particular activity like gem stone fossicking or fishing. A high proportion of grey nomads visiting these destinations are enthusiasts of that activity. They stay at that destination for an extended period, sometimes the entire winter. In addition, grey nomads who travel in a ‘single destination pattern’ to locations on the coast stated that relaxing was one of their primary activities. Grey nomads who generally travel for the purpose of sightseeing, favoured shorter stays at a destination than grey nomads who undertook specialised activities (see Figure 8.9). Grey nomads who stated fishing and fossicking as their primary recreational activity had significantly longer stays at a destination than grey nomads who favoured sightseeing as their main activity (Mann-Whitney test: Fossicking,  $U=325.000$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.004$ ; Fishing,  $U=2050.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.001$ ). Grey nomads who stated fossicking, sports and fishing as their favoured recreational pursuit tended to reside at a one destination for the winter.

#### **8:4. Factors Influencing the Number of Kilometres a Grey Nomad Travelled in a Day whilst En Route to a Destination**

In the above section, significant statistical differences were identified between the length of a surveyed grey nomad’s stay at a particular destination and the kilometres travelled en route. Other factors can also influence the number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled in a day whilst en route. In this section, variables were tested to identify which ones influenced the number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled in a day to arrive at a destination. The variables tested included mean age per vehicle, length of retirement, number of past trips undertaken, states/territories visited, type of retirement funding, type of destinations visited and mode of transport (e.g. caravanning, motor home). Table 8.5 shows the reasons why these variables were tested.

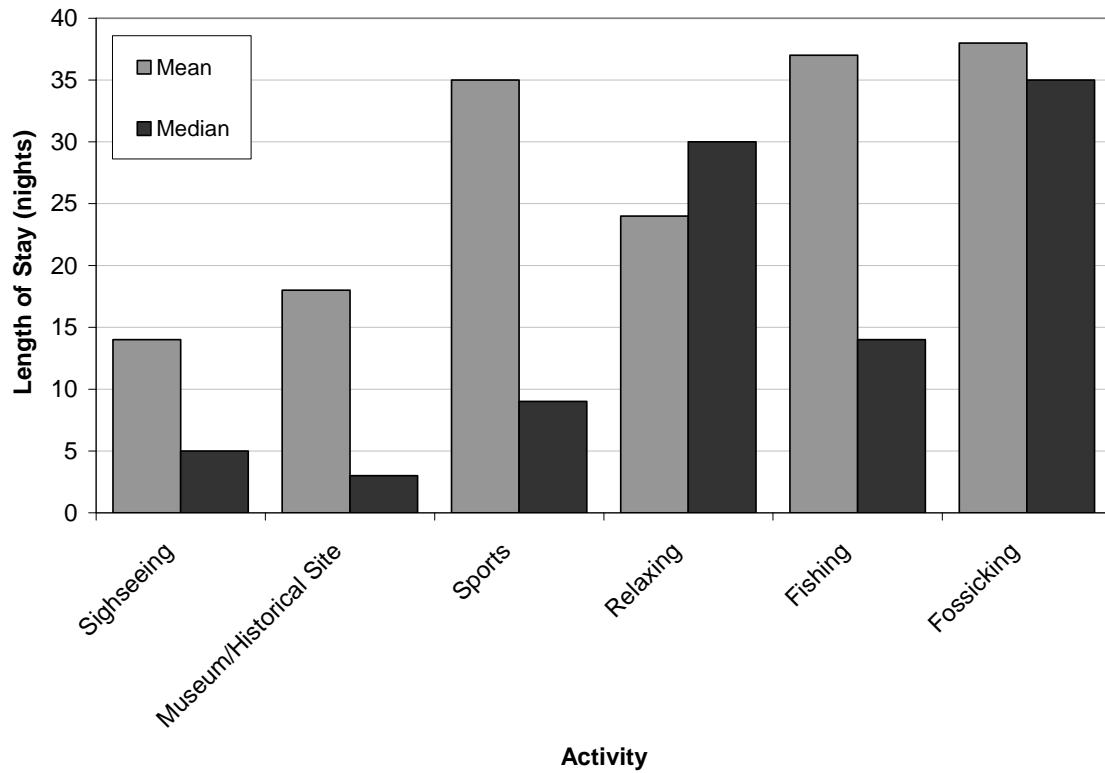


Figure 8.9. The primary activity a grey nomad undertakes and the length of stay at a destination.

*Table 8.5. How selected variables may influence the number of kilometres a grey nomad would travel in a day whilst en route to a destination.*

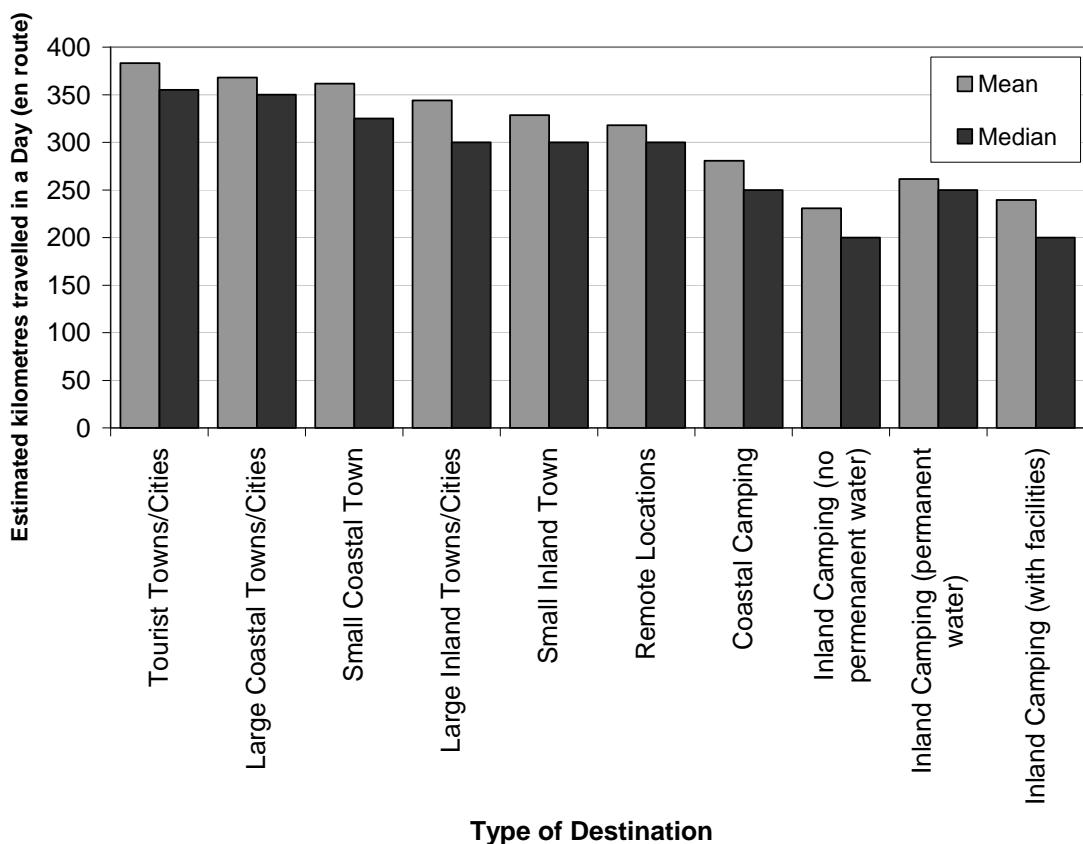
<b>Tested Variable</b>	<b>How may this variable influence the number of kilometres travelled whilst en route to a destination</b>
Mean age per vehicle	Frailty relating to ageing – older drivers may not wish to travel long distances in a day.
Length of retirement	Similar to age and closely related to the number of past trips. In addition, older grey nomads usually have taken numerous past trips and are selective in their destination choice. Furthermore, they have visited attractions and destinations en route and may not wish to revisit.
Number of past trips	As above
States/Territories Visited	Distances between major destinations in WA and the NT are greater than in QLD, which may result in greater distances being driven in a day.
Type of retirement funding	The cost of travelling between destinations are higher than staying at a destination. This fact may result in low income grey nomads limiting the number of kilometres they will travel in a day between major destinations.
Camping Vs Caravan Parks or Types of destinations	Sites in caravan parks can be secured by booking ahead – camping sites can not. Furthermore, the distances between camping sites are usually smaller than for major towns and cities. In addition, a particular type of destination will attract a particular type of grey nomad, who may have a certain type of mobility.
Mode of transport	Some vehicles have greater set-up and pull-down time than others which may influence distance travelled in a day.

A Kruskal-Wallis test identified that factors such as the average age of grey nomads (per vehicle), length of retirement and type of retirement funding were not statistically influence the number of kilometres a surveyed grey nomad would travel in a day whilst en route to their next chosen destination (see Table 8.6). In addition, no significant statistical difference was identified in the amount of kilometres travelled daily en route by grey nomads in Western Australia, Queensland or the Northern Territory. Hence, the spatial distribution of towns and centres does not influence the amount of kilometres a grey nomad travelled in a day when in transit. This result suggested that grey nomads will seek overnight/stopover destinations whilst en route when distances between destinations are greater than 400 km.

A significant difference existed between the number of kilometres travelled in a day by grey nomads who camped and those who preferred to reside in a caravan park whilst en route to a destination (Mann-Whitney test:  $U=52257.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ ). Grey nomads surveyed whilst camping travelled on average 269 km (median =250 km) to arrive at their next destination. Conversely, those grey nomads who were surveyed in caravan parks travelled 357 km (median=350 km) when driving to their next chosen destination. A Kruskal-Wallis test reported that a significant difference existed ( $\chi^2=142.102$ ,  $df=9$ ,  $P\text{-value}=<.001$ ) between the type of destination a grey nomad visited and the number of kilometres they travelled in a day once at a particular destination (see Figure 8.10). This result indicated that grey nomads camping tended to travel less kilometres in a day than grey nomads who preferred caravan park accommodation. Remote camping was the only camping type destination that involved driving more than 300 km to the next camp site. The possible reason for this disparity in the distance travelled whilst en route could be associated with the actual distances between major towns, cities and/or camp sites. A grey nomad travelling to the tip of Cape York Peninsula will spend approximately seven to fourteen days making the return journey. Bamaga and Weipa are the only major urban areas north of Cooktown (excluding Aboriginal communities), which grey nomads visit in large numbers. Driving to both destinations requires long distance travelling. In addition, the number of attractions or places of interest between

*Table 8.6. Results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for variables tested that did not influence the number of kilometres a grey nomad will travel in a day to arrive at their preferred destination.*

Tested Variable	$\chi^2$	df	P-value	Possible Reason Why Variable Had Not Statistical Significance
Mean age of grey nomads per vehicle	11.201	6	.262	Grey nomads only travel a distance which is comfortable i.e. 4 to 5 hours a day.
Length of retirement	13.386	8	.146	As above
Type of retirement funding	5.827	3	.120	As above
State/Territories visited	2.662	2	.264	As above – Regardless of the number of kilometres between destinations



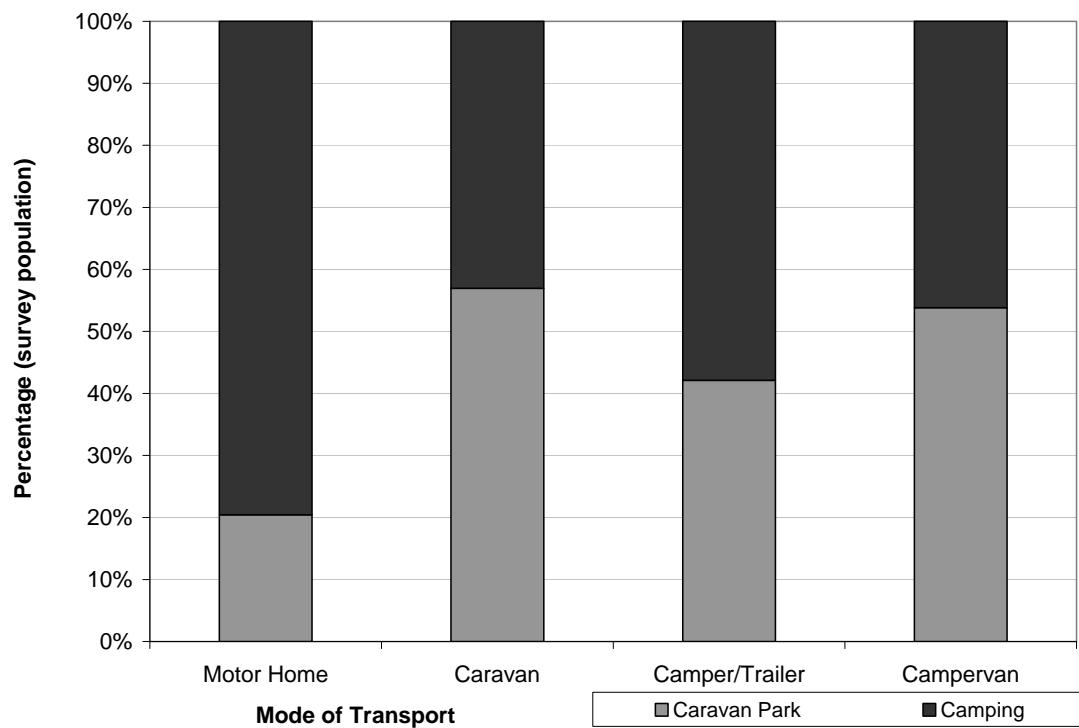
*Figure 8.10. The mean and median distances a surveyed grey nomad would travel in a day to get to a particular type of destination.*

the destinations may be limited or too far from the main route to warrant visitation. Hence, lengthy distances are driven. For all the grey nomads who preferred camping, possible camping locations were found between towns and centres. Therefore, the distance required to travel to the next camping area can be less than to a caravan park in the next town or city. Thus, fewer kilometres were required to be driven in a day. Furthermore, the bulk of the exodus from caravan parks occurred between 7.30 am and 9.00 am (see Plates 6.1 a/b), whereas grey nomads camping frequently departed camping areas at a later time: as late as 10.00 am. Since most grey nomads usually only travel till lunch time, the time difference in departure can contribute to the shortened distance travelled by some camping grey nomads. Another reason for the earlier departure from caravan parks is generally aligned with the need to get a site (if unbooked) in the next town's caravan park before it filled. This problem is not faced by grey nomads electing to camp.

The type of vehicle used by a grey nomad dictated the number of kilometres travelled in a day whilst en route to a destination (Kruskal-Wallis:  $\chi^2=68.860$ , df=7, P-value=<.001). Grey nomads in motor homes generally travelled fewer kilometres to arrive at a destination (average 253 km; median=250 km). Grey nomads in camper trailers/tents tended to travel the greatest distances (average 377 km; median=400 km) to arrive at a destination, whilst grey nomads with caravans travelled on average 340 km (median=300 km) and campervans 301 km (median=300 km) to the next destination. The Mann-Whitney test comparing the differences in the distance travelled for the four types of transportation concluded that grey nomads in motor homes travelled significantly fewer kilometres than grey nomads towing caravans and camper trailers/tents. In addition, differences also existed between grey nomads towing caravans and camper trailers in relation to the number of kilometres they would travel in a day whilst en route to their next destination (see Table 8.7). The reason why grey nomads in motor homes have a lower mobility between destinations is because so many of them prefer to camp (see Figure 8.11). A Chi-square test identified a significant difference between a surveyed grey nomad's mode of transport and the type of accommodation (i.e. caravan park or camping) ( $\chi^2=70.007$ , df=3, P-value=<.001, Cramer V=<.001). A high proportion of grey nomads travelling with motor homes considered caravan parks to be overly expensive.

*Table 8.7. Results of the Mann-Whitney test indicating the significant differences in the mode of a grey nomad's transport and the kilometres travelled in a day whilst en route to a destination.*

Vehicle Type	Motor Home	Caravan	Camper Trailer/Tent	Campervan
<b>Motor Home</b>	Sig=1.000			
<b>Caravan</b>	Sig=<.001 U=24352.500	Sig=1.000		
<b>Camper Trailer/Tent</b>	Sig=<.001 U=1601.500	.001 U=18569.000	Sig=1.000	
<b>Campervan</b>	Sig=.024 U=748.000	Sig=.170 U=5868.000	Sig=.022 U=367.000	Sig=1.000



*Figure 8.11. A comparison of the type of vehicle a grey nomad travelled with(in) and the type of accommodation where they were surveyed.*

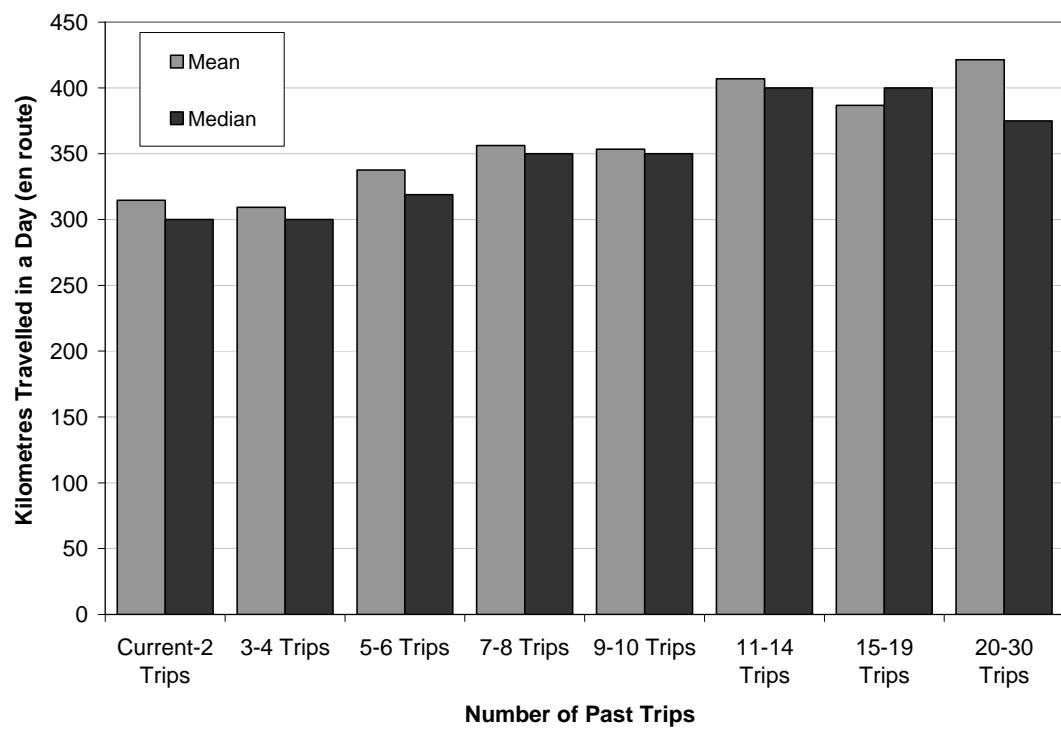
Moreover, due to the nature of motor homing (i.e. the vehicle is their home), sites occupied by motor homes within the caravan parks are often left vacant when they undertake daily sightseeing trips in their vehicle. Many grey nomads with motor homes think that the expense of a site is a waste of money, especially when they are left unoccupied for the greater part of the day. Secondly, the majority of new motor homes and caravans are self-sufficient with their own power and water systems. The ability to be self-sufficient allows for prolonged stays at camping sites with minimal discomforts. Evidence of these attitudes by grey nomads travelling in motor homes can be seen in the following comments:

*“We are self-sufficient, plus we are out and about, seeing this, looking at that almost everyday. Why should we pay for a site in a caravan park when we are rarely there?”* (Grey nomad, No.8).

*“We have a big rig and some caravan parks are too difficult to get in and out of and over priced”* (Grey Nomad, questionnaire No. 275).

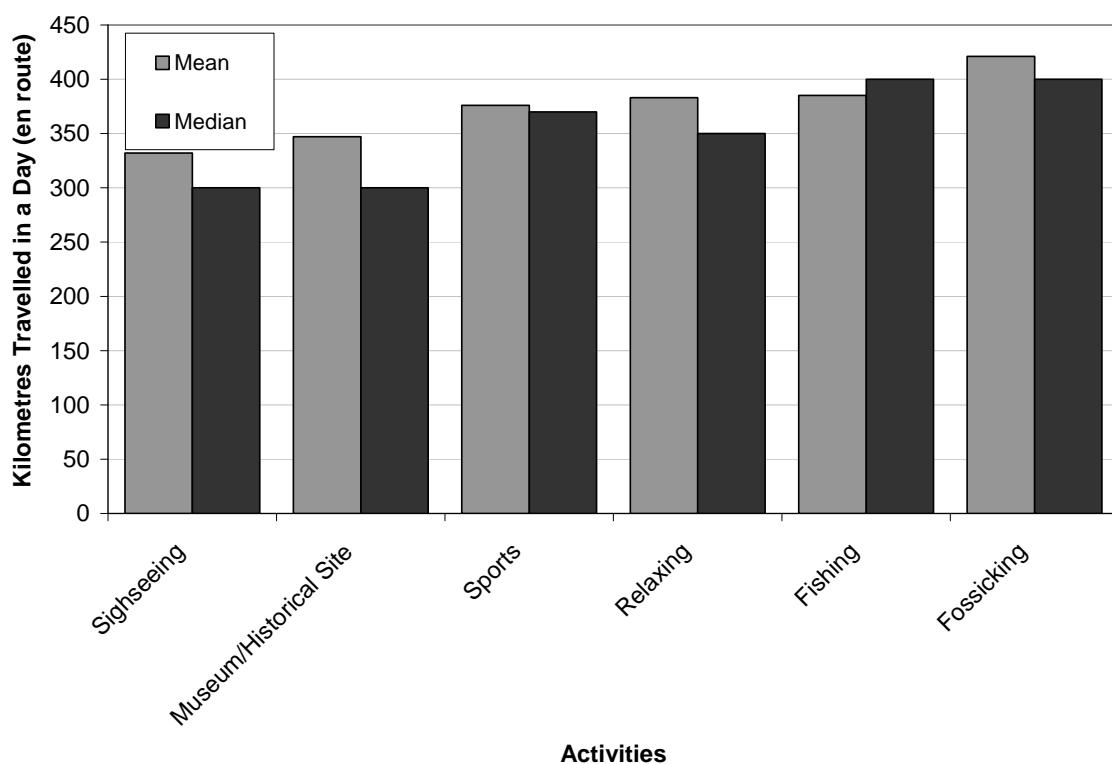
The number of past trips made by grey nomads will influence the number of kilometres they were prepared to travel whilst en route to a destination (Kruskal-Wallis test:  $\chi^2=52.123$ , df=9, P-value=<.001). As the number of past trips undertaken by a grey nomad increased, the number of kilometres travelled to arrive at their preferred destination also increased (see Figure 8.12). The evidence suggested that as grey nomads become older and take more extended trips to northern Australia during winter, they tended not to visit as many destinations compared to when they first started taking winter trips north. Moreover, some grey nomads eventually prefer to reside at one destination for the winter. The emphasis placed on visiting destinations and tourist sites en route has little importance, with the focus being on arriving at their preferred destination as quickly as possible.

The type of activities undertaken by a grey nomad at a destination influenced the number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled to arrive at their chosen destination. This result could possibly be more aligned to the type of destination rather than activities; however, a Kruskal-Wallis test reported a statistical difference between activities and kilometres travelled en route ( $\chi^2=23.550$ , df=5, P-value=.003). Surveyed grey nomads partaking in activities such as fossicking, fishing, relaxing and



*Figure 8.12. The number of trips a grey nomad has undertaken since retiring and the estimated number of kilometres travelled whilst en route to their chosen destination.*

sports (e.g. golf and lawn bowls) tended to drive more kilometres in a day whilst en route than grey nomads who stated sightseeing and visiting museum/historical sites as their preferred activity (see Figure 8.13). Activities like fossicking, fishing and sports are closely associated with those grey nomads who visit one primary destination for the entire winter (i.e. 48 per cent of these grey nomads stayed at the surveyed destination for a period greater than 30 nights). While all grey nomads relax, responses for relaxing as a primary activity were high amongst grey nomads staying at one location for a period greater than 30 nights (64 per cent), especially amongst those residing in tourist centres and coastal destinations. Conversely, visiting museums/historical sites and general sightseeing was a characteristic of grey nomads who are new to the grey nomadic lifestyle (i.e. recently retired, have not taken many past trips to northern Australia since retiring). These grey nomads tended to visit numerous destinations during their travels. Therefore, they have lower mobility whilst en route.



*Figure 8.13. The type of primary activity a grey nomad undertakes at a destination and the estimated number of kilometres travelled in a day en route to their destination.*

### **8:5. Factors Influencing the Number of Kilometres a Grey Nomad Travels in a Day once at a Destination**

The analysis in sub-section 6:9.2 identified that the number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled at a destination was associated with the length of their stay. In this section, variables were tested to identify which ones influenced the number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled in a day once at their chosen destination. Variables tested were mean age of grey nomads per vehicle, their length of retirement, number of past trips undertaken, differences in grey nomads camping or staying in caravan parks, type of retirement funding, preferred activities, type of destinations visited and mode of transport (e.g. caravanning, motor home). Table 8.8 shows the reasons why these variables were tested.

A Kruskal-Wallis test showed that mode of transport, mean age per vehicle, and numbers of past visits all significantly influence the amount of kilometres a grey nomad travelled in a day at a destination (see Table 8.9). However, factors such as whether a grey nomad preferred to camp or stay in caravan parks, length of journey, and length of retirement had no significant influence on the distance they travelled in a day once at a destination. The number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled at a destination can also be influenced by the type of destination itself and the location of attractions (i.e. within the centre/town or located on the peripheral). For example, a sightseeing trip from Winton, in western Queensland, to Lark Quarry Conservation Park (one of Winton's major attractions) is a round trip of approximately 200 km. Conversely, destinations renowned for fishing, like Karumba or Lucinda, may only involve visitors travelling short distances from the caravan park to the boat ramp. A Kruskal-Wallis test showed that the type of activities a grey nomad pursued at a destination and the number of kilometres they travelled in a day at that destination was significantly different.

A Mann-Whitney test showed a significant statistical difference between a grey nomad's mode of transport and the amount of kilometres travelled in a day at a destination. Grey nomads in motor homes travelled fewer kilometres at a destination compared to both those journeying with caravans ( $U=31719.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.003$ ) and those who travelled with camper trailer/tents ( $U=1955.500$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.001$ ). These

*Table 8.8. How selected variables may influence the number of kilometres a grey nomad would travel in a day whilst en route to a destination.*

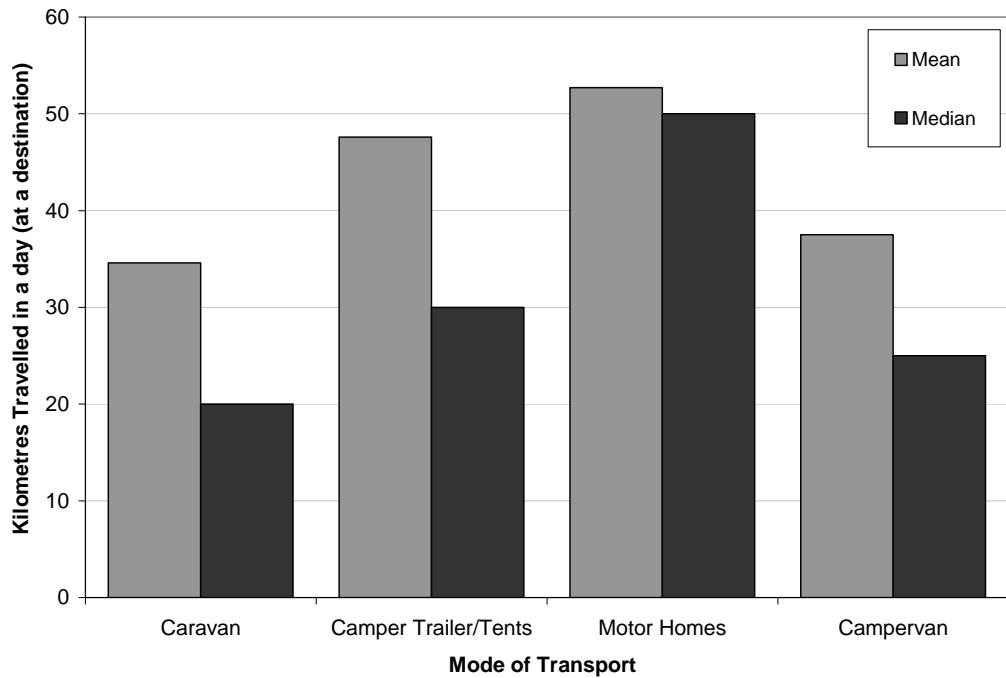
<b>Tested Variable</b>	<b>How may this variable influence the number of kilometres travelled whilst at a destination</b>
Mean age per vehicle	Frailty relating to ageing – older drives may not wish to travel long distances in a day. Closely related to the number of past trips undertaken and the number of years in retirement.
Length of retirement	Similar to age and the number of past trips. In addition, older grey nomads usually have visited local attractions on past trips and may not wish to revisit.
Number of past trips	As above
Type of retirement funding	Those grey nomads on a low income may not wish to travel large distances for cost reasons, preferring to just relax and have ‘lazy days’ around the vehicle.
Camping Vs Caravan Parks or Types of destinations	Different types of destinations have different attractions. Places like tourist towns and cities usually have a large number of attractions within a short drive compared to some small and large towns and cities which may have attraction requiring a day’s drive to visit.
Activities	Activities like sightseeing may require travelling large distances compared to those activities like fishing or relaxing which may only require commuting short distances.
Mode of transport	Grey nomads travelling in a motor home and campervans have their accommodation and mode of transport. Hence, they must repack their vehicle every time the vehicle moves, whereas those in caravans do not have the same inconvenience and are freer to move.

*Table 8.9. Results of the Kruskal-Wallis test on selected variables indicating the significant differences in the number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled in a day whilst at a destination.*

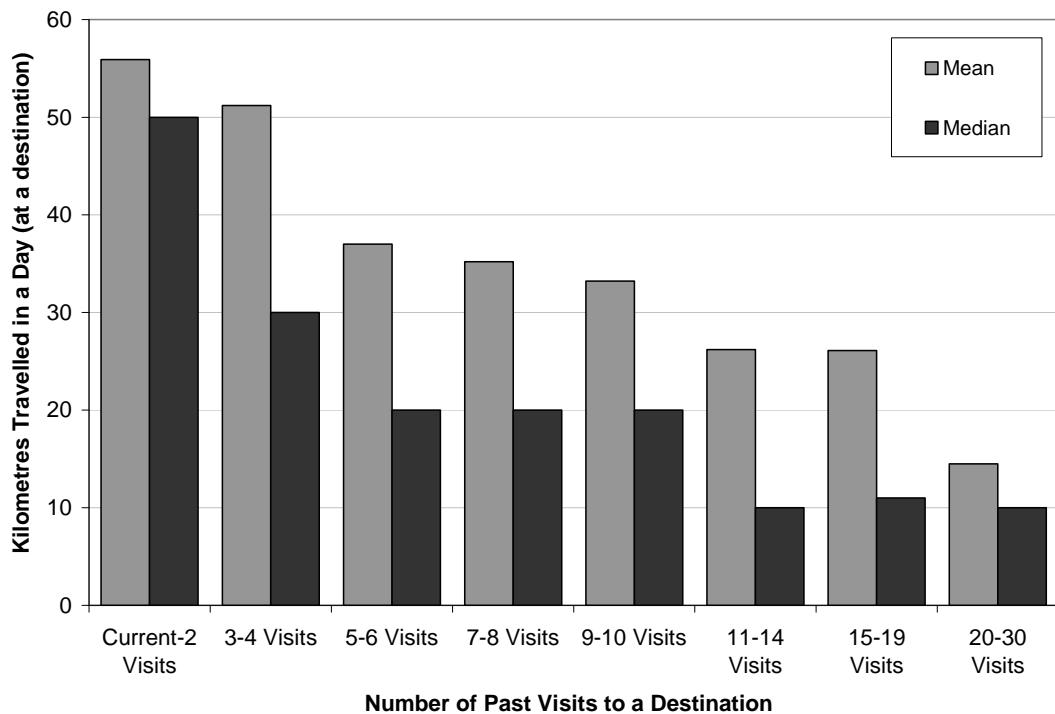
Tested Variable	$\chi^2$	df	P-value	Possible Reason Why Variable Had Not Shown Statistical Significance
Mode of transport	12.594	4	.006	NA
Mean age per vehicle	23.136	6	<.001	NA
Number of past visits	73.979	7	<.001	NA
Length of journey	12.922	9	.074	Possibly due to the high proportion of grey nomads who stay away for 3-4 months.
Length of retirement	13.325	8	.101	Possibly due to the large number of surveyed grey nomads who only travelled on average 20-50 km in a day once at a destination.
Type of destination	24.015	8	.004	NA
Type of activities	15.461	5	.031	NA

differences are shown in Figure 8.14. The nature of travelling in a motor home and campervan does not encourage extensive travel at a destination, because of the excessive amount of packing and unpacking of household items and/or setting up and pulling down awnings. The inconvenience of having to pack away everything in their vehicle inhibits the level of movement at a destination for grey nomads travelling in motor homes and campervans. Those grey nomads travelling with a caravan are able to set up their camp or caravan site and then are free to leave their caravan on site whilst they commute in the tow vehicle.

The number of past visits a grey nomad has made to a destination since retiring can influence the number of kilometres they would travel in a day once at their chosen destination (Kruskal-Wallis test:  $\chi^2=73.797$ , df=7 P-value=<.001). As the number of past visits increase, the amount of kilometres a grey nomad will travel at a destination declines (see Figure 8.15). Grey nomads who have visited a destination on numerous occasions have generally visited many of the local attractions that destinations have to offer. The need and the desire to revisit some of these attractions lessen with increased visitation. These grey nomads usually spend their days relaxing or having “lazy days” where they stay by their caravan or motor



*Figure 8.14. The number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled once at a destination in relation to the type of vehicle they drive.*



*Figure 8.15. The estimated number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled at a destination in relation to the number of past visits to a destination.*

home. The level of inactivity amongst these grey nomads can have an economic impact on their host communities. Whilst they pay for a site, they do not generally partake in costly tourist activities and will only consider participating in those activities that are inexpensive. Moreover, grey nomads new to a destination are more eager to visit as many local attractions as possible. Hence, they are willing to travel a large number of kilometres once at a destination. These grey nomads, due to their higher level of activity and eagerness to undertake tourism related activities, provide a higher economic yield for their host community compared to those who frequently visit the same destination and only participate in low cost activities.

A Mann-Whitney test on the type of grey nomad's retirement funding and the number of kilometres travelled in a day at a destination identified a significant statistical difference between grey nomads on a full pension and those who are self-funded ( $U=65512.000$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.043$ ). Grey nomads on a full pension travel fewer kilometres (average=42 km: median=28 km) than grey nomads who are self-funded (average=48 km: median=50 km), on a part pension (average=51 km: median=30 km) and those on long service leave (average=88 km: median=100 km). The high mobility amongst those grey nomads on long service leave is possibly a reflection of an eagerness to undertake as many activities as possible before having to return to work. Grey nomads who have retired develop a different attitude towards travel: "*what we miss this time we'll see next year*" (Grey nomad No 48: diary comment). Grey nomads on long service leave do not have this luxury. Grey nomads with pensions tended to be older and favoured longer stays than more mobile younger grey nomads. Hence, longer stays are conducive to shorter distances travelled at a destination. Furthermore, the additional expense of travelling large distances once at a destination is a luxury some grey nomads on a pension can ill-afford.

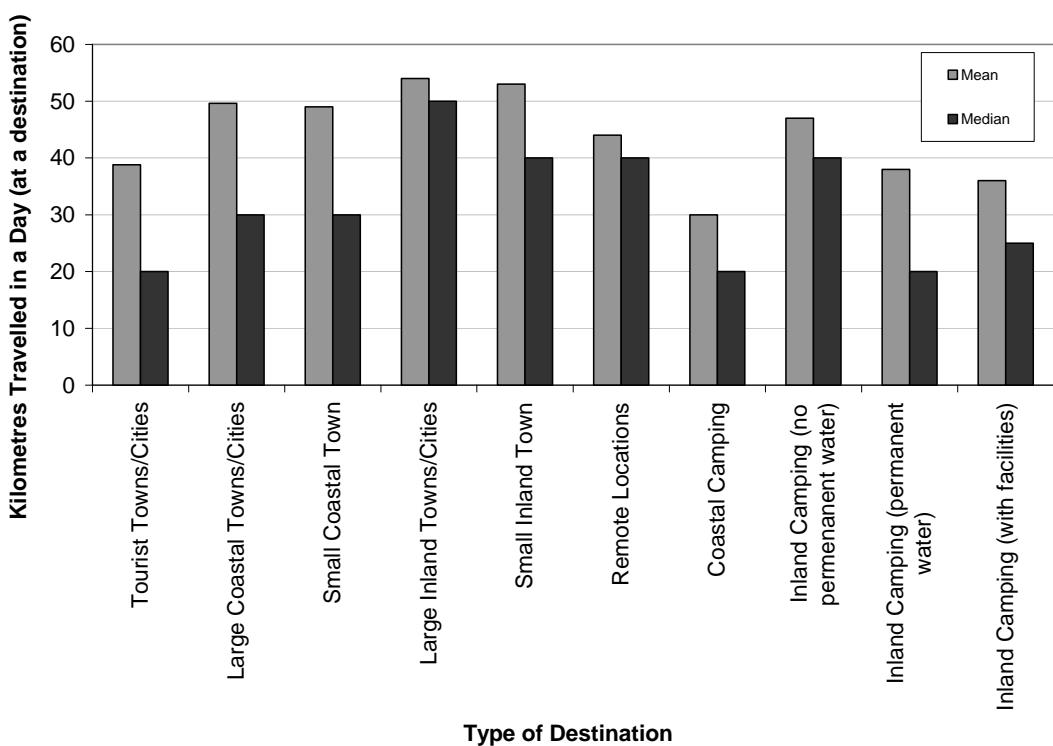
No statistical difference existed between the amount of kilometres travelled in a day by grey nomads who camped or preferred to stay in caravan parks (Mann-Whitney:  $U=77198.00$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.085$ ). However, a statistical difference did exist between the number of kilometres travelled each day by grey nomads at different types of destinations (Kruskal-Wallis:  $\chi^2=24.015$ ,  $df=9$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.004$ ). Results from the Mann-Whitney tests indicated the presence of some significant statistical

differences in the number of kilometres a grey nomad travelled in a day when visiting a particular type of destination are highlighted in Table 8.10. Results indicate that grey nomads who visited tourism based towns and cities (e.g. Cairns) travelled significantly fewer number of kilometres in a day than those who visited large coastal towns or cities such as Townsville or Mackay (see Figure 8.16). Furthermore, a difference also existed between the number of kilometres grey nomads travelled in a day when staying at tourism based towns and cities, large inland towns and cities (e.g. Mt Isa), and small inland towns (e.g. Barcaldine). These results are understandable as most attractions at tourist based destinations are centralised near the destination and often transport can be provided by operators. Conversely, attractions at large coastal towns and cities may not be as centralised. Moreover, tourist towns and cities like Airlie Beach, Exmouth and Broome attract a high proportion of long-staying grey nomads who generally have low levels of mobility whilst at these destinations. Grey nomads who preferred to camp on the coast also travelled statistically less kilometres in a day once at their destination than grey nomads who temporary resided at either large coastal towns and cities, and small inland towns. This result is due to the high number of grey nomads who camp at the coast. They usually just wish to relax in a coastal environment and not partake in numerous activities. Days are mostly spent relaxing around the camping site and undertaking activities relating to that site, like fishing. In addition, many coastal camping areas, especially in Western Australia, attract long-staying grey nomads who display low mobility whilst at their destination. A significant statistical difference also existed in the number of kilometres travelled in a day between grey nomads residing at small coastal towns and inland camping sites near permanent water sources. This result is due to the lack of attractions near camping locations and the high proportion of grey nomads who camp near permanent water for extended lengths of time.

. A Kruskal-Wallis test found the activities a surveyed grey nomad undertook at a destination can significantly influence the average amount of kilometres travelled in a day whilst at their chosen destination ( $\chi^2=15.461$ , df=5, P-value=.031). Although the significance level is only small, activities associated with sightseeing and visiting museums/historical sites generally involved driving greater distances than activities

*Table 8.10. Mann-Whitney tests results on the number of kilometres a grey nomad would travel in a day at a destination and different types of destinations where they were surveyed.*

Type of Destinations	Large Coast Towns/ Cities	Small Coastal Town	Large Inland Towns/ Cities	Small Inland Town	Tourism Towns/ Cities	Remote	Coastal Camping	Inland Camping (no permanent natural water)	Inland Camping (permanent natural water)
<b>Small Coastal Town</b>	U= 7767.00 Sig.=.471								
<b>Large Inland Town/Cities</b>	U=12583.50 Sig.=.226	U= 9423.50 Sig.=.096							
<b>Small Inland Town</b>	U= 8091.00 Sig.=.680	U= 6028.00 Sig.=.342	U=10287.0 Sig.=.476						
<b>Tourism Towns/Cities</b>	<b>U= 6415.50 Sig.=.001</b>	U= 5426.00 Sig.=.123	<b>U= 7676.50 Sig.=&lt;.001</b>	<b>U= 4973.00 Sig.=.007</b>					
<b>Remote</b>	U= 2091.50 Sig.=.964	U= 1584.50 Sig.=.783	U=2473.50 Sig.=.418	U= 1612.00 Sig.=.780	U= 1312.00 Sig.=.157				
<b>Coastal Camping</b>	<b>U= 3823.00 Sig.=.008</b>	U= 3301.00 Sig.=.111	U=2473.50 Sig.=.418	<b>U= 2950.50 Sig.=.005</b>	U=3664.50 Sig.=.900	U= 781.50 Sig.=.105			
<b>Inland Camping (no permanent natural water)</b>	U= 1803.00 Sig.=.966	U= 1363.00 Sig.=.782	<b>U= 4552.00 Sig.=&lt;.001</b>	U= 1399.50 Sig.=.835	U=1114.50S ig.=.153	U= 359.50 Sig.=.958	U=659.00 Sig.=.096		
<b>Inland Camping (permanent natural water)</b>	U= 5655.50 Sig.=.185	<b>U= 6717.00 Sig.=.016</b>	U= 2137.50 Sig.=.459	U= 6717.00 Sig.=.119	U= 4343.50 Sig.=.310	U= 1146.50 Sig.=.460	U=2629.50 Sig.=.234	U= 982.00 Sig.=.458	
<b>Inland camping (with washing facilities)</b>	U= 5655.50 Sig.=.185	U= 1832.00 Sig.=.680	U=2633.50 Sig.=.100	U= 1711.00 Sig.=.265	U= 1659.00 Sig.=.354	U= 445.50 Sig.=.508	U= 993.00 Sig.=.244	U= 379.00 Sig.=.475	U= 1462.00 Sig.=.921



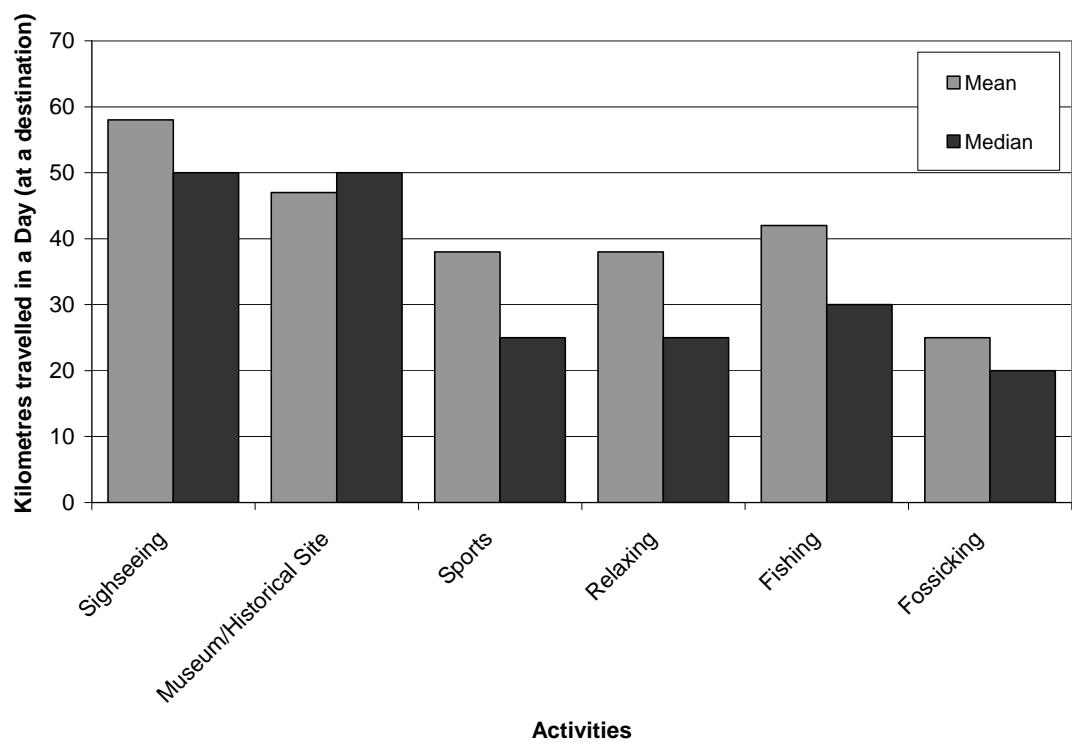
*Figure 8.16. The average amount of kilometres a grey nomad travelled whilst visiting different types of destinations.*

such as fossicking, sports and relaxing (see Figure 8.17). Destinations that specialised in certain activities like fossicking and fishing often have caravan and camping sites located in close proximity to where these activities can be undertaken. Therefore, the need to travel a great distance is not necessary.

### **8:6. The Type of Destination and its Influence on Mobility**

The above sub-sections identified that the differences in the kilometres a grey nomad travelled whilst at a destination and en route was influenced by the destination's geographical location, size and/or its type (i.e. camping or caravan park). A Kruskal-Wallis test identified that the number of past trips taken also influenced a grey nomad's choice of destination ( $\chi^2=71.130$ , df=9, P-value=<.001). The median number of trips by surveyed grey nomads since retiring was four trips with a mean of six trips. Grey nomads who preferred to reside at tourist centres and coastal camping locations have undertaken a higher than average number of past trips (see Figure 8.18). In addition, grey nomads visiting large coastal centres had also undertaken a close to average number of past trips. Furthermore, grey nomads who visited inland towns and centres have below average and median number of past trips. This evidence suggests that grey nomads who have taken above average numbers of trips will gravitated towards coastal destinations. The high average number of past trips undertaken by grey nomads visiting remote locations may suggest that these grey nomads are well travelled and seek out remote locations to broaden their travel experience.

A chi-square test identified that the type of vehicle a surveyed grey nomad travels in or tows dictated which types of destinations will be visited ( $\chi^2=139.891$ , df=27, P-value=<.001, Cramer V=.218). The adjusted standardised residual (ASR) indicated that grey nomads towing caravans tended to favour caravan park accommodation at tourist centres and both large and small coastal towns and centres (see Table 8.11). Conversely, the grey nomads in motor homes avoided these destinations, preferring to stay at inland and coastal camping destinations. In addition, grey nomads towing camper trailers have a higher propensity to stay in remote locations, whereas grey nomads with caravans avoid towing their caravans on



*Figure 8.17. The primary activities a surveyed grey nomad undertook at their chosen destination and the average amount of kilometres travelled in a day at that destination.*

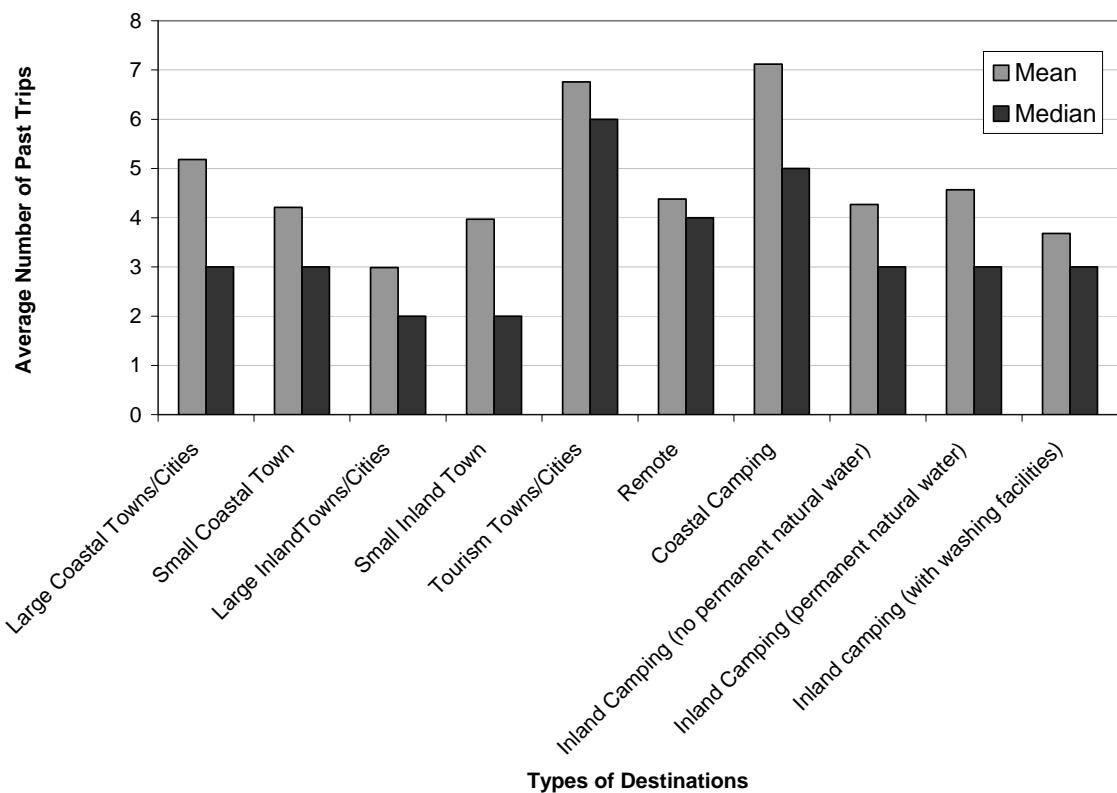


Figure 8.18. The number of past trips undertaken by grey nomads and the types of destinations visited.

*Table 8.11. Cross tabulation and adjusted standardised residual results on mode of transport and type of destination visited.*

Type of Destination		Mode of Transport				Total
		Motor Home	Caravan	Camper \tent	Campervan	
Large Coastal Towns/Cities	Count	6	135	5	2	148
	Expected Count	18.0	117.9	9.2	2.9	148.0
	Adjusted Residual	-3.3	3.8	-1.6	-.6	
Small Coastal Town	Count	6	106	7	0	119
	Expected Count	14.5	94.8	7.4	2.3	119.0
	Adjusted Residual	-2.5	2.7	-.2	-1.7	
Large Inland Towns/Cities	Count	19	153	16	5	193
	Expected Count	23.4	153.7	12.0	3.8	193.0
	Adjusted Residual	-1.1	-.1	1.3	.7	
Small Inland Town	Count	14	94	6	6	120
	Expected Count	14.6	95.6	7.5	2.4	120.0
	Adjusted Residual	-.2	-.4	-.6	2.5	
Remote	Count	2	20	10	0	32
	Expected Count	3.9	25.5	2.0	.6	32.0
	Adjusted Residual	-1.0	-2.5	6.0	-.8	
Coastal Camping	Count	20	53	2	0	75
	Expected Count	9.1	59.7	4.7	1.5	75.0
	Adjusted Residual	4.0	-2.0	-1.3	-1.3	
Inland Camping (no permanent natural water)	Count	9	17	1	0	27
	Expected Count	3.3	21.5	1.7	.5	27.0
	Adjusted Residual	3.4	-2.2	-.6	-.7	
Inland Camping (permanent natural water)	Count	21	65	6	4	96
	Expected Count	11.7	76.5	6.0	1.9	96.0
	Adjusted Residual	3.1	-3.1	.0	1.6	
Inland camping (with washing facilities)	Count	15	23	3	0	41
	Expected Count	5.0	32.7	2.6	.8	41.0
	Adjusted Residual	4.9	-3.8	.3	-.9	
Tourism Towns/Cities	Count	5	101	4	2	112
	Expected Count	13.6	89.2	7.0	2.2	112.0
	Adjusted Residual	-2.6	2.9	-1.2	-.2	
Total	Count	117	767	60	19	963
	Expected Count	117.0	767.0	60.0	19.0	963.0

\*Residuals over 1.96 or below -1.96 are considered significant (Nishimura, et. al., 2007)

the rough roads often associated with travelling to remote locations. These results are not surprising as camper trailers are purposely designed to travel to remote locations and most caravans do not have this capability. Additionally, grey nomads with motor homes tended to avoid caravan park accommodation because they had built in self-sufficient accessories, like hot water systems and solar power, and generally deemed the cost of some caravan parks stays as being over priced.

### **8:7. The Impact of a Grey Nomad's Medical Conditions on their Mobility**

A grey nomad's medical condition can influence their mobility. Some grey nomads with respiratory problems like Sleep Apnoea require a ventilator and, therefore, must reside at locations that provide permanent power in order to run the ventilator. This limitation inhibits these grey nomads from staying at camping locations. Furthermore, from the 346 grey nomads surveyed, eighteen per cent (n=63) indicated that they plan their trip to be at a certain destination (e.g. Emerald, Mt Isa, Darwin, Broome) to utilise its medical facilities. Staying at a destination may involve getting prescription drugs, visiting a general practitioner or specialist, or having blood tests completed. Evidence of medical conditions influencing mobility is highlighted in this grey nomad's response:

*"My wife requires a number of specialised drugs. We generally have to ring ahead to the chemist so they can order them in. Sometimes they are there waiting for us, other times we have to wait a few days to a week, in some cases.....And of course if we get to town on a Saturday afternoon or Sunday we also have to wait for the chemist to open to collect the drugs, if they have them"* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 256)

### **8:8. The Impact of Travelling with Pets on Grey Nomad Mobility**

Approximately 350 grey nomads indicated whether they were travelling with a pet or not. Questions relating to grey nomads with pets were only asked in the 2006 survey, after it became apparent during the field surveys in 2005 that this practice caused some concern amongst the grey nomad community. Approximately fourteen per cent (n=49) of the grey nomads surveyed travelled with a pet - primarily dogs of varying sizes. Many grey nomads who were interviewed and travelling with their pets claimed that approximately twenty per

cent of retirees on self drive holidays do travel with pets. This figure is unsubstantiated and observations during the field trips suggested that their numbers may not be as high as some grey nomads indicated. Grey nomads travelling with their pets tended to interact more with other grey nomads who also travelled with their pets. The reason for this type of interaction is because of the limited site availability for clients travelling with pets at certain destinations. Pets are not allowed in national parks, and certain caravan parks, for fear of litigation in the event of a pet/human incident. In addition, grey nomads who travelled with pets are often forced to reside in peripheral caravan parks, or go to camping areas. In some caravan parks that allow pets, patrons with pets are often segregated into designated pet owner sites, limiting the interaction between them and other travellers who do not travel with pets. The problems facing grey nomads travelling with pets were highlighted by this grey nomad's comment:

*"It would be good if car parks in National Parks allowed access for dogs. You are very limited at what you can access when travelling in a motor home with a dog. Places like Uluru and the Olgas we couldn't get near to."* (Grey nomad, questionnaire No. A9)

Many grey nomads travelling with pets think that they are treated as outcasts. This sentiment can be seen in this grey nomad's comment:

*"Fed up with being treated as a second rate citizen because we travel with our beloved dog."* (Grey nomad, Questionnaire No. 86)

For grey nomads, their pets are considered as a surrogate child or travelling companion, and the thought of placing them in a kennel or leaving them at home is not an option. These grey nomads emphasized this point in these comments:

*"Pets are companions and therapy for single people. 'I know.'..... In fact - I have made some good friends through dogs in caravan parks."* (Grey nomad, questionnaire No. 139)

*'You ask her [the dog]. She'll tell yah. She's not a dog, she's a human and she won't let us forget it'.* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 56)

The restrictions placed on travelling with pets (i.e. access to locations) influenced the mobility of grey nomads who choose to travel with their pets.

## **8:10. Conclusion**

The factors that influenced a grey nomad's mobility were examined in this chapter. Rarely does one factor influence differences in a grey nomad's mobility. Variations in

mobility can be contributed to a number of physical and psychological factors. Factors such as type of vehicle, age, number of past visits to a specific destination, overall number of past trips, the location of destinations, weather patterns, and retirement income can all influence a grey nomad's mobility. Psychological factors, such as, the activities a grey nomad undertakes at a destination, their preference in destination and their choice to travel with pets or not can all alter mobility.

The spatial distribution of destinations did not influence the distance a grey nomad would drive in a day to arrive at a destination, although it influenced a surveyed grey nomad's length of stay at a destination. Grey nomads visiting destinations in Western Australia stayed significantly longer than grey nomads from the eastern states visiting Queensland. Furthermore, in Western Australia there were ample en route stopover destinations between major centres for grey nomads to rest. For example, between Port Hedland and Broome (a distance of 615 km) there were caravan parks where grey nomads can reside en route at Pardoo Station, Eighty Mile Beach and Barn Hill Station, as well as numerous free camping areas. Thus, there is no need for grey nomads to travel large distances in a day to arrive at their next preferred destination. In addition, there are more destinations (e.g. urban settlements) in Queensland than in northern Western Australia and the Northern Territory. The lack of destinations and the greater distance required travelling between destinations in Western Australia and the Northern Territory are contributing factors for an increase in the length of stay.

The age, length of retirement and the number of past trips are all positively correlated with each other. As a grey nomad's age increases and they undertake more winter trips, their mobility alters. For older grey nomads who have taken numerous past trips, their mobility at a destination slows, whereas their mobility between destinations will increase. As a result, these grey nomads will generally begin to visit fewer destinations and at the destinations they do visit, their length of stay increases. This type of movement eventually results in some grey nomads opting to reside at a single destination for the entire winter. These factors also influenced the level of planning a grey nomad will make prior to departure. Furthermore, mobility en route will increase as past trips and visitation increases, whereas once at a destination their mobility generally declines as the desire to visit local attractions decreases.

The level of mobility was influenced by the type of activities a grey nomad undertakes. However, the type of activity was closely aligned with the choice of destinations. Grey nomads, like all tourists/travellers, will visit a destination or destinations that fulfil their desires or needs (Lue *et. al.*, 1993). Hence, grey nomads who partake in a particular type of activity will seek out those specialised destinations. With prolonged and repeated visitation to a particular destination, a strong bond can develop between fellow visitors with similar interests, as well as the destination. This bond helps to increase the desire for further repeat visitation (Sullivan, 1983). In contrast, grey nomads who visit multiple destinations usually have numerous desires (i.e. a curiosity to explore and experience different attractions and activities), requiring higher levels of mobility. This higher level of mobility inhibits frequent interaction between grey nomads that are highly mobile, thus, impeding the development of the same type of bonds displayed by those grey nomads who only visit one destination for the entire winter. As a result, the desire for constant repeat visitation is not as strong.

This research also concluded that factors associated with the type of vehicle towed or travelled within, in addition to a grey nomad's retirement income, can influence mobility. The type of vehicle a grey nomad drives or travels with can determine their length of stay at a destination, and/or their choice of destinations and in turn the number of kilometres they will travel once at a destination. For example, grey nomads in motor homes tend to seek out camping type destinations and have shorter stays than grey nomads towing caravans. Grey nomads who receive a full pension usually travel on a low budget. This factor can impede their movements, especially in the face of rising fuel and accommodation costs. Hence, grey nomads on a low income will generally limit their movements whenever possible, preferring to stay at budget type accommodation and spend their days relaxing. Furthermore, underpinning most of these characteristics is a grey nomad's psychological and cognitive preferences such as the types of people they choose to interact with, what destinations they will visit and which routes they will take. For instance, constant social interaction with like minded cohorts at one destination, in consecutive years, may enhance the desire to visit that destination in future trips. All these factors are interwoven and are the driving mechanisms in determining different levels of mobility. The psychological and cognitive preferences of grey nomads will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

## **Chapter Nine**

### **Classifying Grey Nomads and the Implications for Destinations Visited**

#### **9:1. Introduction**

In the previous chapters the discussion centred on examining the differences in grey nomad mobility and their socio-economic and demographic characteristics. Results in those chapters highlighted that grey nomads are not a homogenous population. The type of destinations visited by grey nomads, the activities they undertake, their mobility and to some degree their socio-economic/demographic characteristics are all interwoven factors that influenced the level of grey nomad interaction. Hence, one characteristic will influence another and this will dictate the nature of social connectivity. All these factors contributed to the development of several, identifiable sub-populations within the grey nomad community. This chapter will examine the different nature of interaction between grey nomads and highlight the major differences that characterise each sub-population. Furthermore, the implications of grey nomad mobility and possible future movement trends to regional Australia will also be examined.

#### **9:2. Grey Nomads' Thoughts Regarding Future Trips**

As the cost of travel (e.g. rising fuel and accommodation costs) and the difficulties of finding a site at some destinations increases, in addition to restrictions placed on travel (e.g. restrictions on travelling with pets, camping and access to certain locations), the question becomes, “what will happen to the grey nomad movement in the future?” The capital investment that some grey nomads have outlaid in the purchase of a vehicle and/or a caravan is a sign that many are committed to seasonal travel and will maintain their peripatetic lifestyle regardless of the increasing costs. The cost of buying a new or used caravan and vehicle or a motor home can be in excess of \$150 000. Many a child’s inheritance can be seen travelling the highways of Australia during the winter months as retirees take ‘SKI’ (Spending Kids Inheritance) trips.

From the questionnaire survey, 843 grey nomad travel parties indicated their level of intent to continue taking these winter journeys. Just over 430 grey nomads stated that they planned to continue taking winter trips over the next four years (at time of survey). Only five grey nomads claimed that their current trip would be their last, stating that increased costs of travel, ill health, difficulties of staying in caravan parks (e.g. securing a site; overcrowding) or the complications of living in a confined space of a caravan or motor home had made future travel impossible. One disgruntled grey nomad discussed his thoughts regarding the future of grey nomad movement. Whilst his thoughts may be considered extreme, a few grey nomads did echo similar concerns as this comment:

*"This is just a tired old Victorian whining away – But I feel that the 'Northern Australia' tourist industry is about to DIE. The caravan parks will be the first to go – as the fuel price rockets up, plus the customers wither away – Their only answer is to keep jacking up their price! Their rotten old 'amenities' blocks get a quick swish now and then, as the dust and grime swirl. The smarties are getting out ASAP. We are going home to sell the 4wd and the van."* (Grey nomad, questionnaire No. B20)

The majority of grey nomads interviewed (both structured and semi-structured interviews) expressed concern about rising costs of travel, overcrowding in caravan parks and the quality of services provided, but had not considered ceasing extended winter journeys in the future. Many grey nomads, although disgruntled about having to pay higher and often perceived inflated costs, considered the cost of travel to be not too over bearing. This statement is reflected in one grey nomad's comment:

*"If it's a choice between going away or staying at home to save some dollars, we'll go away.....We have to pay for food at home and we are not using any power or water while we are away.....[and] the cost of diesel is cheaper, or no dearer here than at home..... The cost isn't that much more.....If we find the cost becomes too great we just won't travel around as much"* (Grey nomad, No. 32).

As travelling becomes possibly more expensive and difficult in the future, many grey nomads were considering altering their movement patterns to offset the rise in the cost of travel. Some of the measures that grey nomads were considering to reduce their travel costs were: (1) visiting fewer destinations when travelling and residing longer at

those destinations; (2) free camping more often; and/or (3) not travelling as far north. All these changes will have an impact upon the economies of regional Australia.

The evidence presented above suggests that at least some grey nomads think these winter journeys are not a too large a burden on their retirement funding. Furthermore, in the previous chapter, variations in expenditure were discussed and the cost of travel whilst en route was found to be significantly higher than the cost of staying at a destination. Rather than ceasing travel due to rising costs, some grey nomads will slow their movement patterns to offset higher costs (i.e. stay longer at a destination). Any reduction of mobility on a large scale may have detrimental effects on a number of destinations. Obtaining a site at highly popular destinations may become difficult as the rate of site turnover decreases. Moreover, McKercher (2001) concluded that long stay visitors generally have lower daily expenditure than visitors who stay only for a short length of time. This possible slowing in mobility will impact upon the level of cash injection at popular destinations. Small stop-over or transient destinations may also see fewer visitations as grey nomads begin to free camp in greater frequency and numbers. These destinations will probably be the first to suffer lost income due to the change in the pattern of travel of grey nomads.

A high proportion of motor homes and caravans constructed within the last five years are generally self sufficient, having solar power, hot water systems to run showers and their own toilet. These accessories reduce the need for continuous stays in caravan parks, thus allowing more grey nomads to seek out alternative forms of accommodation. As the cost of fuel and sites in caravan parks become more expensive and harder to obtain, many grey nomads may camp or seek low budget sites in greater frequency to offset the rising costs. This sentiment is reflected in this comment by one grey nomad:

*"If we camp out, say two nights a week that could save us \$40 to \$60 a week, that's a half a tank of fuel. It all adds up. It's becoming a necessity for many of us to camp to offset the increasing cost of travelling".* (Grey nomad, No. 2)

A high number of grey nomads made similar comments during the semi-structured and formal interviews, stating that they were considering camping more frequently to save dollars and maintain this type of lifestyle. An increase in camping by grey nomads will require improved infrastructure (e.g. toilets; dump spots - both solid and liquid) at camping and overnight locations to limit any environmental impact (see Plate 9.1). Camping areas will also need more stringent policing by both the police and council rangers.

A few grey nomads suggested that they may shorten the distance travelled during their winter trip. These grey nomads, especially those who visit destinations in coastal Queensland, see the closure of caravan parks at their favourite destinations as an indication that they are not wanted. Caravan park closures are occurring all along the eastern seaboard, especially at popular North Queensland destinations, and this trend is forcing many grey nomads to alter their movement pattern. As a result of these closures, the number of available caravan park sites in all of tropical Australia is decreasing, leading to overcrowding and difficulties in obtaining a site, chiefly at popular destinations. In addition, the closures are forcing those grey nomads who visit these caravan parks, especially those who stay the entire winter, to find new destinations, thus breaking their ties to that location. Destinations in the sub-tropics such as Hervey Bay and Burnett Heads still have a pleasant winter climate in comparison to southern Australia and there is less expense in travelling to these locations. One grey nomad surveyed at Mackay stated:

*"We've been coming to this park for the last five years and it's been sold and closing down at the end of the year. We've been thinking about spending next year at Hervey Bay.....Why bother travelling all the way up here.....Staying at Hervey Bay will save us time and money..... The weather at Hervey Bay isn't much different than Mackay and it is still warmer there than in Victoria". (Grey nomad, questionnaire No. 225)*

Comments made by some grey nomads in this caravan park advised the interviewer that they had heard of other grey nomads who were contemplating not travelling as far north in future trips. How this possible change in movement will impact on the revenue of destinations across Australia is yet to be seen.



*Plate 9.1. Discarded toilet paper littering a rest area in Western Australia. Evidence of human waste and refuse littering the landscape was noted at all visited rest areas in Western Australia that didn't have toilet facilities.*

(Source: Cridland, 2006)

The closure of caravan parks at certain destinations may be influencing grey nomad mobility. Field studies conducted in 2005 at Cairns and Mareeba in Far North Queensland (FNQ) identified that the majority of grey nomads visited Cairns for approximately a week, and then another week (or so) was spent on the Atherton Tablelands or vice versa. Most of this movement took the form of Lue *et. al's.* (1993) 'trip chaining' or 'regional' patterns. In the Cairns region there have been many caravan park closures over the last four years, limiting the number of sites available for grey nomads. On a photo taking excursion to Mareeba in 2007, a number of grey nomads stated that they were staying at Mareeba for a number of weeks and using it as a base camp to explore FNQ. These grey nomads said that they only visited Cairns on day excursions. This type of movement was not identified during the survey of grey nomads in the Mareeba/Cairns region in 2005. Hence, due to park closures, grey nomads travelling in a 'regional pattern' or 'trip chaining pattern' to the Mareeba/Cairns area have incorporated 'base camp pattern' movement as part of their mobility once in FNQ. The influence of caravan park closures on the movement patterns of grey nomads in other areas of Australia requires further investigation as expenditure patterns may impact of regional economies.

The rising cost of travel, in particular fuel, may also contribute to a decline in the number of grey nomads doing the traditional trip around Australia, known as the 'Big One' or 'the trip around the block'. A journey from Sydney to the west coast through inland Queensland, without visiting coastal North Queensland, may be considered as a trip around Australia. Grey nomads, however, consider this route not to be the classic/tradition 'trip around the block'. The traditional trip involves circumnavigating the Australian coastline. Travelling around Australia in one trip is expensive and time consuming. Rather than circumnavigating Australia in one trip, grey nomads preferred to explore regions and states in separate years. Dividing the country into regions allows greater time for exploration and gives grey nomads more time to save money between trips instead of taking one large expensive trip. Evidence of this type of mobility can be seen in this grey nomad's comment:

*"Why bother doing one big trip. It cuts the amount of time you have to see things and doesn't give you much time to relax as you have to be on*

*the go all the time. A part from that it is also very costly..... We travelled around Queensland last year, so we thought we'd do the [Northern] Territory and Western Australia this year". (Grey nomad, No. 33)*

### **9:3. Social Interaction within the Grey Nomad Population and Other Travellers.**

The social interaction between individual grey nomads is complex. Some interactions are brief; others are long standing. Oppermann (1997) highlighted the importance of past visitation to a destination and how numerous visits can create an environment conducive to the development of close ties to that destination, leading to further future visitations. Furthermore, Gross and Brown (2008) concluded that the nature and extent of social interaction between tourists/travellers can not be understated as a motivating fact for repeat visitation to a particular location. They reported that the interaction between likeminded individuals (i.e. those individuals that enjoy similar activities and/or moral beliefs) had higher levels of interaction during their stay compared to other tourists/travellers. This interaction often developed into a lasting friendship, even after the vacation had ended. In addition, Trauer and Ryan (2005) stated that close social bonding between travellers at a destination often reflected a heightened level of enjoyment amongst traveller at that destination. They added that these positive feelings often resulted in the development of a strong bond towards that destination, which in turn fostered further visitation.

The interaction between grey nomads was determined by the length of visitation, the reason for visiting that destination and the kind of destination visited (i.e. what the destination has to offer). Grey nomads residing at the same single destination each year develop strong social ties with other grey nomads displaying similar visitation characteristics at that destination (Dredge and Jenkins, 2003; Gross and Brown, 2008). In contrast, grey nomads who have high mobility and visit numerous destinations, do not have the same opportunities to develop these strong bonds with a single destination or other individuals (Larsen *et. al.*, 2006). This type of high mobility, however, can still contribute to the development of lasting ties with other fellow grey nomads displaying

similar movement patterns. A major problem during field surveys was the high number of grey nomads who were surveyed at one destination being encountered again at another. Despite travelling autonomously, many grey nomads with similar high mobility will interact throughout their journey with the same grey nomads numerous times at different destinations because they are travelling on the same routes and have similar movement patterns. At many destinations, the principal investigator was forced to wait and let the current group of grey nomads moved to their next destination. Waiting at a destination allowed a new group of unsurveyed grey nomads to replace the already surveyed cohorts, breaking the cycle of repeated interaction with the same grey nomads. Waiting did not solve the problem entirely, but it did lessen the degree of repeated interactions. Furthermore, the interaction was not restricted to the one journey. Five grey nomads surveyed in Queensland during 2005 were also encountered in 2006 (these individuals were not surveyed in 2006). This type of interaction can develop into long lasting friendships as phone numbers and addresses are exchanged. The level of bonding can be seen in this grey nomad's comments:

*"We sent off almost 100 Christmas Cards last year to people we have met in our travels.....A few we are in constant contact with.....Some have visited us at home and we've visited them. We have made some wonderful friends through our travels."* (Grey nomad, No. 2).

Grey nomads are generally very sociable. Many grey nomads nicknamed their partner Mr. or Mrs. 'Have-a-chat', in reference to the frequency they are often found chatting with other grey nomads about their travels, cheap fuel and places to go, their latest innovations to their vehicle/caravan or 'the one that got away'. Hence, a strong camaraderie exists within the grey nomad population. Grey nomads constantly wave to each other as they pass one another on the road when travelling. A strong understanding also exists amongst the grey nomads about the need to help each other in times of need. Of the 346 grey nomads surveyed in 2006, 297 stated that they have sought or would seek assistance from fellow grey nomads in an emergency situation. In most cases, this dependence on fellow grey nomads for assistance was the only plan some grey nomads had made in preparation to deal with an emergency situation. This evidence suggests that most grey nomads place a high level of trust in their fellow traveller. However, on deeper examination some small social divides became evident, especially during 'Happy

Hour' (i.e. a time that takes up about two hours of the day before sunset). This social divide was prominent at destinations that attracted grey nomads who have either long or short stays, such as tourist and coastal centres and towns. The level of interaction between grey nomads having long stays and those who were only visiting for a short period were minimal during Happy Hour. Observations during field surveying identified that grey nomads who resided at the same caravan park for the entire winter generally congregated in large groups (i.e. ranging from six to twenty or more individuals), whereas short staying grey nomads tended to keep to themselves. The only time these groups would generally come together was during official organised functions like a caravan park barbecue. Even then the level of interaction was brief, with each type of grey nomad preferring to stay in their own group. This result was not surprising because grey nomads who have lengthy stays at a particular destination usually developed a strong social network amongst other grey nomads in surrounding caravan park or camping sites (Trauer and Ryan, 2005; Gross and Brown, 2008). In contrast, grey nomads visiting a destination for a short period tended to exclude themselves from large unofficial gatherings, probably due to the non-existent social networks and lack of knowledge about which couples were residing at the current location (Kyle *et. al.*, 2004; Hall, 2005; Larsen *et. al.*, 2006).

Grey nomads residing at a destination for the entire winter can become very territorial towards that location and the people within their particular social group. The constant interaction over numerous years with the same individuals provides the foundation for the development of strong social ties within a group and to a location, to the exclusion of others. Furthermore, these ties can foster a feeling of ownership towards a location (Kyle *et. al.*, 2004). In the case of caravan parks, having to pay for a site can harbour a feeling of ownership towards that particular site or sites pertaining to members of that group. A grey nomad who was questioned by a long-term resident about the site they were occupying hinted at this 'territorialism' in the following comment:

*"We had just pulled into the park and were setting up when we were approached by an old guy who started drilling us about how long we were there for. He kindly informed us that we had to vacate before the following week as one of his friends had the site booked."* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 124)

Interestingly, a similar occurrence happened in 2005 to the survey party at a caravan park in Bowen. Even though this type of questioning is undertaken with good intentions, it can harbour ill-feeling between grey nomads and widen the divide between grey nomads at certain destinations. In many caravan parks, separate areas are generally set aside for long-stay and short-stay grey nomads. This segregation further limits the interaction between these groups of grey nomads.

Grey nomads are for the most part highly sociable individuals, but the above details highlight that a social mind-set can differentiate between grey nomads residing at the one location for the entire winter from those who are only visiting for a few days. This social divide, however, is more apparent amongst grey nomads residing in caravan parks compared to those camping. During ‘Happy Hour’ in many camping areas, it was not unusual to see some of the grey nomads who intended to stay for a short period enjoying a beer or a glass of wine with groups of grey nomads who had settled in for the entire winter. This interaction was particularly evident at camping areas along the Pilbara coastline. At other camping destinations, this type of interaction was noted, but it was not as prolific. The open spaces associated with camping compared to the confinement of caravan park accommodation, in addition to not having to pay for a site, may possibly reduce a sense of territorialism towards a location. This mindset may promote greater interaction between individuals. The change in mindset is evident in this grey nomad’s comment:

*“I’ve noticed! You meet someone in a caravan park and they seem to be more highly strung and they’ll keep more to themselves but when you get the same person out here [camping] they seem more relaxed and open.....People who camp out just seem to be more easy going.”*  
(Grey nomad, No. 27)

The general camaraderie between grey nomads was high regardless of the differences in mobility, socio-economic/demographic characteristics and preferred activities amongst those surveyed. Travelling was considered to be a “*level playing field*” (Grey nomads, diary comment No 87). Millionaire grey nomads can be seen rubbing shoulders with grey nomads struggling on a pension and telling the two apart can be virtually impossible. However, the highest amount of camaraderie was noted between

the individuals travelling together (i.e. the married and de facto couples). Living in a confined space for many weeks requires patience and understanding. From choosing destinations to sharing household chores, every decision grey nomads couples made became an exercise in compromise. The female domain usually revolves around internal maintenance (e.g. cleaning) of the caravan or motor homes and the male's domain is everything involving external matters (e.g. mechanical). However, many chores were shared equally. Many household tasks (e.g. washing, cooking) not usually undertaken by an individual whilst at home were frequently completed by that person whilst away. For example, often a male grey nomad can be spotted sitting in the middle of nowhere doing the laundry, beer in one hand and a churning stick working up and down in a wash bucket. This sharing of household chores is illustrated by this female grey nomad's comment:

*"I can't get him to do anything around the home, apart from the lawns but when we go away he helps with the laundry, helps clean the caravan and sometime even cooks. He's almost a totally different person."* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 351)

Travelling with each other virtually 24 hours a day could either result in bringing grey nomad couples closer together or tearing them apart. The poem at the beginning of this thesis suggests they learn more about themselves and generally become closer. Throughout the field trips, there was no anecdotal evidence or hearsay to indicate married or de facto couples separated as a result of travelling, although some grey nomads talked about disputes between friends travelling together. Instead, grey nomad couples were often observed walking in the afternoon holding hands, rather than quarrelling. The most stressful time, and usually the only time when grey nomad couples were observed to be discontented with each other, occurred during the reversing of their vehicle (i.e. caravans) onto a site. This task can result in many arguments, as hand signals become confusing, and frustration can lead to quarrels. However, many grey nomads now use hand held two-way radios and reversing cameras to make this task easier, limiting the number of disputes. Thus, observations and conversations with grey nomads suggested that taking trips generally bring couples closer together, strengthening their bonds with each other in later life. Such a sentiment is evident in this grey nomad's comment:

*"I think my wife was a bit fearful when I retired that she'd have to put up with me at home all the time.....We go away and are rarely apart. We do everything together.....and each trip we amaze ourselves on what the other is capable of doing."* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 331)

Grey nomads do not see themselves as tourists, so interaction between grey nomads and other tourists is also limited. The majority of grey nomads generally refer to themselves as travellers. A strong anti-tourist sentiment exists within the grey nomad population. This anti-tourist sentiment does not suggest that they are against tourism or other tourists: just that they see themselves as travellers and not tourists. Many feel the length of time they spend travelling and/or their high level of mobility sets them apart from tourists. The anti-tourist sentiment is strongest amongst the older, well travelled grey nomads and can be seen in this grey nomad's comments:

*"I just want to clear something up. You call us tourists. We are not tourists, we see ourselves as travellers. Tourists come from overseas, only stay a week or two and only see the tourist sites and do touristy things. We explore all the places in between.....We may have been tourists once, when we first started going away as we did act like them but we are not interested in tourism stuff now.....We travel to explore, experience and learn about our country."* (Grey nomad, No. 18)

Jacobsen (2000) noted a similar type of sentiment in retirees from northern Europe residing along the Mediterranean coast during the northern winter. This different mind set could also be the reason why very little social interaction was observed occurring between grey nomads and international visitors, especially in caravan parks. Dunn (1999) also highlighted that the strength of anti-tourism sentiment amongst individuals who considered themselves to be travellers was so high that many tourist operators were dropping the word 'tourist' or 'tourism' for 'traveller' in their marketing strategies. The psychological differences within the mind set and the transition of grey nomads from being a tourist to a traveller requires further investigation, as this transition may be associated with changes in expenditure patterns and activities undertaken at a destination.

#### **9:4. Classification of Grey Nomads into their Sub-Populations**

Results from this study have identified that grey nomads are not a homogenous community and that differences do exist within the population. Both socio-economic and demographic characteristics influenced mobility and destination choice. Furthermore, the activities available at a destination influenced the nature of visitation. All these factors play an important part in the social interaction and bonding between individual grey nomads and can be used to categorise grey nomads into certain sub-populations. Field observations and the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data in Chapters Five to Eight provided the foundation for identifying different grey nomad sub-populations (process explained in sub-section 4:7.3 in Chapter Four). Examining the differences and similarities in various characteristics of grey nomads (i.e. mobility, activities undertaken, socio-economic/ demographic status and destination preference) led to the identification of six separate sub-classifications of grey nomads. These groups are: ‘enthusiasts’, ‘sun soakers’, ‘semi nomadic’, ‘wanderers’, ‘adventurous’, and ‘budget’ grey nomads. Many of these groups have similar characteristics, but differences in either choice of destination and type of activities undertaken, in addition to their nature of social interaction and mobility, helped to identify separate sub-populations. This classification of grey nomads was complicated because some grey nomads may change groups from journey to journey based upon their travel needs at the time. Nevertheless, it was still possible to classify grey nomads into groups by examining the differences in mobility, the major activities undertaken throughout their travel, the types of destinations visited and their socio-economic/demographic characteristics. There were 138 surveyed grey nomads who could not be classified into a particular sub-population as they had too many characteristics which placed them into more than one group. Table 9.1 shows the major characteristics of the different sub-populations. The discussion in the following sub-sections will outline in more detail the characteristics of each sub-population.

Table 9.1. The major characteristics of the different grey nomad sub-populations

Characteristics X (low).....XXXXX (High)	Enthusiast	Sun Soakers		Semi Nomadic	Wanderer	Adventurous	Budget
		Luxury	Beachcombers				
Mobility: En route	xxxxx	xxxxx	xxx-xxxxx	xxx	xxx-xxxxx	xx	x
Mobility: At Destinations	x-xx	x	x-xx	xxxx	xx-xxx	xxxxx	x
Overall Mobility	x-xx	x	x-xx	xx-xxx	xxxxx	xxxxx	x-xx
Length of stay	xxxxx	xxxxx	xxx-xxxxx	xxx	x-xx	xx	x-xxx
Age	Early 60 years +	Mid 60 years +	Mid 60 years +	Mid to late 60 years +	50s to late 60 years	50 to early 70 years	Mid 60 years +
Level of repeat visitation	xxx-xxxxx	xxx-xxxxx	xx-xxxxx	xxx	x-xx	x-xx	x-xxxxx
Main Activities undertaken	F, Foss	R, B	R, B, F	R, B, F, Foss, SS	R, B, F, Foss, SS	R, B, F, Foss, SS	R, F
Frequency of stays in caravan park	xxxx-xxxxx	xxxx-xxxxx	xxx-xxxx	xxx	x-xxxxx	xx-xxx	x
Frequency of stays camping	x-xxx	x	x-xx	xx-xxxx	xx-xxxx	xx-xxxx	xxxx-xxxxx
Overnight stays in rest areas	x-xx	x-xx	xx	xxx-xxxxx	xxxx-xxxxx	xxxx-xxxxx	xxxx-xxxxx
Type of retirement income	S/F, P	S/F, PP	S/F, P, PP	S/F, P	S/F, P, PP, LS	S/F, P, PP, LS	P
Level of daily expenditure	x-xx	x-xxx	x-xx	xx-xxx	xxx-xxxxx	xx-xxxxx	x
Pre-retirement employment	Mixed	Prof, Man, Trade	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Lab, Trade
Type of vehicle	C	C	C	C, MH	C, MH, CT,CV, T*	C, CT , T*	C, MH
Social interaction within group	xxxx-xxxxx	xxx-xxxxx	xxx-xxxxx	xxx-xxxxx	x-xxx	x-xxx	xxx-xxxxx
Social interaction with other grey nomads	x-xx	x-xx	x-xxx	xx-xxx	x-xx	x-xx	x-xx
Mobility Pattern	SD	SD, AR	SD, AR, ER	RT, TC	RT, TC	RT, TC	SD, RT, TC

F - Fishing, **Foss** - Fossicking, **R** - Relaxing, **SS** – Sightseeing, **B** – Beaches.

**S/F** – Self-Funded, **P** – Pension, **PP** – Part Pension, **LS** – Long Service.

**Mixed** – Mixture of pre-retirement employment, **Prof** – Professional, **Man** – Management, **Trade** - Trade Person, **Lab** – Labouring.

**C** – Caravan, **MH** – Motor Home, **CV** – Campervan, **CT** – Camper Trailer, **T** – Tent, \* - Discarded Caravan or Motor Home.

**SD** – Single Destination, **AR** – Alternate Return, **ER** – En Route, **TC** – Trip Chaining, **RT** – Regional Touring.

### 9:4.1. Enthusiasts

The enthusiast category applied to 102 surveyed grey nomads. Enthusiast grey nomads generally travel to a primary destination where they spend the entire winter. These grey nomads enjoy partaking in certain specialised recreational activities such as fishing or fossicking (i.e. gold, gem stones), which they actively pursue their chosen destination (i.e. most of their day time hours are taken up in pursuit of this activity - see Plate 9.2). The trip for enthusiast grey nomads is far less a journey of exploration compared to grey nomads belonging to the wanderers, adventurous and semi nomadic categories. Enthusiast grey nomads do not feel the need to explore and experience the diversity of Australia. Rather, they prefer to participate in their chosen activities and meeting friends. These two factors strongly motivated enthusiast grey nomads to undertake such journeys. Primary destinations can be located either inland, in the case of those grey nomads who have an interest in fossicking, or on the coast for grey nomads who enjoy fishing. The emphasis for an enthusiast grey nomad on undertaking winter trips can be seen in this comment:

*"We come here every year for the fishing and to see friends.....We leave home and drive almost directly here.....It usually takes us a week from the time we leave home till we get here and the same when we leave. We're not really interested in stopping along the way, just overnight stays. We've seen it in all in the past.....We also come up here to see friends and spend the winter with them."* (Grey nomad, No. 6)

Overall, enthusiast grey nomads have a low mobility level. As the above quote suggests, movement to the primary destination and return is generally fast and usually direct. These grey nomads travel the same route to arrive at their primary destination as their return journey.

When en route, enthusiast grey nomads will travel considerable distances in a day (i.e. over 350 km) to reach their primary destination. Stays en route are kept to a minimum, mostly overnight, but usually never more than a few days. If longer en route stays occur, they are usually taken for the purpose of visiting family and friends. When in transit, enthusiasts will rarely stay in free camping areas, preferring to seek out cheaper



*Plate 9.2. Grey nomads going down to launch their boats for the day's fishing at Karumba, situated in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Karumba is a prime destination for the enthusiast-type grey nomad who enjoys fishing. (Source: Cridland 2005)*

caravan parks away from larger urban centres: “*caravan parks in larger cities are rarely cheap*” (Grey nomad: diary comment No 567). The same caravan parks are repeatedly used on all journeys and the subsequent return journey home. At their primary destinations, enthusiasts stay almost solely in caravan parks. However, there is a small population of grey nomads fishing enthusiasts who reside in low cost camping areas along the Pilbara coast. Once at a destination, their mobility becomes minimal, only travelling in relation to their chosen recreational pursuit and to shop for groceries (usually once a week). Long-stay camping enthusiasts in the Pilbara will share the shopping duties amongst themselves. One grey nomad will do the weekly shopping for other members of the group. This limits the need for trips into the nearest town. Evidence of such communal shopping is highlighted in this comment:

*“We share our shopping. Before when we head into Karratha we run around to everyone and see what they need. They do it for us.....It just saves all of us running into town for bread and milk and anything else we need.”* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 358)

Enthusiast grey nomads are generally aged 65 years and over, but a few grey nomads aged 60 to 64 years were noted. They have a high instance of repeat visits to the same destination. Those enthusiasts who rely on caravan accommodation try to stay on the same site within a caravan park, often booking the site six to twelve months in advance. They travel almost exclusively in large four wheel drives towing medium to large caravans. A large four wheel drive is required to legally tow the large sized caravan and to carry the collapsible boat trailer (see Plates 9.3 a to c) and boat (carried on the roof). High proportions of male enthusiast grey nomads stated that they were self-employed or were employed as a tradesperson prior to retiring. Female grey nomads had a mixture of pre-retirement employment. The type of retirement income did not dictate whether a grey nomad was an enthusiast or not; they were made up of both self-funded retirees and pensioners. However, very few enthusiast grey nomads were on long service leave or on a part pension. Enthusiast grey nomads generally keep their expenditure to a minimum, avoiding commercial tourist ventures and rarely dining out or visiting coffee shops. Their major expenses revolved around costs relating to accommodation, food and pursuing their chosen activity.



(a)



(b)



(c)

*Plate 9.3. Collapsible boat trailers. (a): A collapsible boat trailer on the back of a caravan. (b and c): Collapsible boat trailers in use at Karumba. In this car park there were 121 boat trailers: 109 were collapsible trailers. (Source: Cridland, 2005; 2006)*

Enthusiasts are highly social within their own group. Constant repeat visitation to the same location fosters a strong bond with that destination and to other grey nomads with similar mobility and interests (Trauer and Ryan, 2004; Gross and Brown, 2008). During ‘Happy Hour’, it is not unusual to see large separate groups of enthusiast grey nomads congregating together (six or more couples) with beer and chardonnay in hand, discussing a wide range of topics ranging from the day’s activities to the state of the country (see Plate 9.4). All grey nomads are extremely sociable individuals. However, during ‘Happy Hour’, rarely will other sub-categories of grey nomads, especially those who are only having a short stay at a destination, be seen within the enthusiast congregation.

#### **9:4.2. Sun Soakers**

The sun seeker category contains 147 surveyed grey nomads. Like enthusiast grey nomads, the majority of sun soakers generally spend the entire winter at one primary destination located along the coastal fringe. The primary motivator for sun soakers to undertake an annual winter journey northwards is to escape the winter or as one grey nomad said: “*just to lay back and enjoy the sun*” (Grey nomad, diary comment No 98). Sun soakers generally do not wish to explore a region or to engage in a specialised activity. The primary activity of sun soakers was to relax and unwind in a coastal environment, as well as undertaking the occasional game of lawn bowls or golf. Their trip was a break from the usual routine of daily life at their summer address, in addition to escaping the winter cold. Such motivation can be seen in this sun soaker’s statement:

“*We like to go away because it helps to break up the year.....we love the lifestyle, the beaches, the people and the warmth*” (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 45).

Overall, sun soakers have a moderate to low level of mobility. Their movement en route is slower than, and not necessarily as direct as enthusiast grey nomads, although mobility en route can be still considered high. When travelling en route, sun soakers



*Plate 9.4. Groups (front centre and back right) of gem stone enthusiasts relaxing during 'Happy Hour' after a day of fossicking at Sapphire. During field interviews, two groups in this photo identified themselves as being gem stone enthusiasts. The other group (back left) identified themselves as Wanderers. (Source: Cridland, 2005)*

travel approximately 300 km in a day. Their length of stay at en route destinations can vary from overnight stops to a stay of a couple of days. Some sun soakers take up to a month to travel to their primary destination and a month to return home, but most time spent in transit is usually less than two weeks, each way. Return routes may differ from the initial northern routes and routes may also different between trips, but usually the routes which are taken remain the same for each trip and for both north/south movement. Sun soakers are frequent repeat visitors, visiting the same primary location year after year. Sites in caravan parks are generally booked six to twelve months in advance. Once at their primary destinations, sun soaker grey nomads tended not to travel far from their primary destinations.

Some grey nomads start off their grey nomadic lifestyle as a sun soaker grey nomad, just going to the one destination and spending every winter at that destination. These individuals tended to have a long history of association with their chosen destination. This history usually started as holiday vacations during their working life. However, some sun soakers evolved from the wanderer sub-population. These sun soakers also have a past association with their chosen destination, but this association usually began in their post retirement period and developed further through past grey nomad trips. Factors which sun soakers considered when selecting their primary destination were the type of amenities available, a friendly environment, both in town and within the caravan park, and an aesthetically pleasing landscape.

Sun soakers can be divided into two further sub groups: ‘luxury’ and ‘beachcombers’. The differences lie in the type of primary destination and the type of retirement income. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the primary destinations of sun soakers were almost solely coastal locations. However, primary destinations for luxury grey nomads are caravan parks located in large coastal centres and tourist centres. At these destinations, luxury grey nomads find the desired security, services and infrastructure only large centres provide (e.g. coffee shops, shopping centres, and variety of golf courses or bowling clubs). The importance of services at a destination for a luxury grey nomad was highlighted in this grey nomad’s comment:

*"We go away for almost four months and spend about two months here.....Port Douglas has everything we need. A pleasant laid back environment. I can play golf and if we want to live it up, we can go into town for dinner or a coffee." (Grey nomad, No. 15)*

As mentioned earlier, most sun soakers spend their days relaxing or playing sports. At Bowen, one caravan park adjacent to a golf course had an extremely high proportion of grey nomads who played golf, whilst the caravan park less than two kilometres away and located near a lawn bowling green attracted a high percentage of grey nomads who enjoyed lawn bowls. This trend suggested that within large regional centres, different grey nomads were attracted to different localities within that centre depending upon the location of particular infrastructure.

Luxury grey nomads rarely, if ever, camp. They generally preferred to stay solely in caravan parks. They never ventured off-road in their own vehicles. When luxury grey nomads ventured off-road, they generally preferred to take an organised tour, visiting remote attractions. One luxury sun soaker, for example, owned a late model four wheel drive vehicle. Rather than taking their vehicle to the tip of Cape York Peninsula and risking damage, they preferred instead to take a ten day Cape York off-tour adventure. Hence, they tended not to be overly adventurous, especially the older luxury sun soakers, preferring "*not to rough it*" (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 16).

Money was not a major concern for most luxury grey nomads. They frequented coffee shops and restaurants, but generally no more than once a week and usually on cheap/discount nights. However, compared to short staying visitors (i.e. less than a week) they were considered low yielding (i.e. have low expenditure). In addition, luxury grey nomads occasionally utilised commercial tourist ventures during their early visits, but after the second and third visits they tended to cease visiting local attractions, preferring to relax by the ocean. Primarily, luxury grey nomads were generally self-funded retirees or on a part pension, aged 64 years and over. The majority of males were ex-managers and professionals prior to retirement. Females had mixed pre-retirement employment. They travelled in a late model vehicle, either a conventional vehicle (sedan) or a four

wheel drive, which they used to tow a medium to large model caravan (usually less than six years old and five metre plus). All luxury grey nomads surveyed were travelling in vehicles towing a caravan. No luxury grey nomads surveyed were travelling within a motor home or other forms of transportation. When a luxury grey nomad's site in a caravan park became unattainable, usually through the closure of that caravan park, they rarely choose to stay at the same type of caravan parks as beachcombers. Rather, they tended to relocate to a similar type of destination or a caravan park at the same urban centre. One grey nomad surveyed in Cairns highlighted how the closure of their usual winter caravan park had impacted on their future movements:

*"We used to stay at the park at Trinity [Cairns Northern Beaches] but they have closed it on us. We came to this park cause we like it in Cairns but it just hasn't got the same feel.....Some from the park [people from the closed park] have gone to Wonga [small town north of Port Douglas], some went to Mission [Beach] and others have just gone tripping. I think we'll be going to Mission next year to catch up with friends".* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 5)

Sun soakers, like enthusiasts, develop strong bonds with other grey nomads of the same sub-population (Trauer and Ryan, 2004; Gross and Brown, 2008). This bond is fostered over years of constant interaction. Luxury grey nomads socialised with all grey nomads throughout the day, although during 'Happy Hour' they mostly congregated with other luxury grey nomads in groups of two to four couples (see Plate 9.5). A grey nomad from another sub-population will very rarely mingle with sun soakers during 'Happy Hour'.

Luxury grey nomads preferred the large coastal centres, although beachcombers preferred a beach front caravan park in a small, quiet coastal town. They stayed in camping/rest areas when en route to a destination, but preferred to reside in caravan parks when staying at a destination overnight. Beachcombers considered that small coastal towns provided them with a more aesthetic environment and were less crowded compared to the larger centres. Beachcombers did not need the same level of amenities (i.e. coffee shops) as luxury grey nomads. Their choice of a small town over a larger centre was represented by this grey nomad's comment:

*"We have stayed at the larger cities. The caravan parks are more crowded, sites are smaller and the whole place is just busy.....Here we can relax and not have to worry about the beach being overcrowded or worry about parking – not that we drive anywhere when we are here. Everything is in walking distance."* (Grey nomad, No. 16)

Beachcombers were generally aged 65 years and over and consisted of a mixture of self-funded retirees and pensioners, especially those on a part pension. They travelled primarily with a medium sized caravan (four to five metres) towed behind a four wheel drive vehicle which is less than eight years old. Most male beachcombers were employed as either tradespersons or worked prior to retirement in white collar jobs in education, sales or civil service. Females were employed in a mixture of occupations. They rarely undertook any expensive organised commercial tourist activities, but dined out, usually lunch, in a large regional centre once a week when doing the weekly shopping. However, some shopping duties were often shared between beachcombers - a similar practise was observed amongst those fishing enthusiasts camping in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, where one or two grey nomads shopped in a major centre for a number of other grey nomads.

Beachcombers were extremely sociable with other beachcombers. However, like enthusiasts, beachcombers during 'Happy Hour' usually congregated within their own groups, comprising of two or three couples, but groups in excess of six couples were not unusual. The strong social bonding amongst beachcombers usually excluded other grey nomads from their congregation (Trauer and Ryan, 2004; Gross and Brown, 2008). Nevertheless, occasionally, short-staying grey nomads who visited a beachcomber's destination were seen in their congregations during 'Happy Hour', usually when they are camped at adjacent sites. Most interaction between different grey nomads within the caravan park occurred during organised activities, like morning teas, barbeques and trivia nights, which were a characteristic of a number of caravan parks located in small coastal and inland towns (e.g. Flying Fish Point, Midge Point).



*Plate 9.5. A group of luxury grey nomads having an afternoon drink during 'Happy Hour' at Broome. (Source: Cridland, 2006)*

### 9:4.3. Semi Nomadic

The semi nomadic category applied to 178 surveyed grey nomads. Semi nomadic grey nomads were well-travelled individuals. The majority of semi nomadic grey nomads stem from the wanderer and adventurous group of grey nomads. However, when a semi nomadic grey nomad visited a new region, their travel characteristics may revert back to something similar to a wanderer or adventurous grey nomad, but their mobility levels are not usually as high. Hence, they have undertaken numerous trips north during winter since retiring during which they gained a vast knowledge about routes and destinations, including what amenities and attractions destinations have to offer. One of the main differences between enthusiasts, sun soakers and semi nomadic grey nomads was that the semi nomadic grey nomad travelled to more than one primary destination. The number of primary destinations varied depending upon the individual's or couple's choice, with most visiting six or more primary destinations per trip. Their knowledge of what destinations offered allowed them to become highly selective in their destination choices. Therefore, the need to visit as many destinations as possible during a single trip was not high, compared to earlier trips. This change resulted in a slowing in mobility, as lengths of stays at a chosen destination generally increase in duration.

Semi nomadic grey nomads travelled a high number of kilometres whilst in transit (>300km) to their next destination. When overnight stays were required while en route, they consisted of no more than a few days. The need and desire to visit or have lengthy stays at certain destinations when travelling en route declines as these destinations have been visited and explored on previous occasions. Thus, overall mobility of semi nomadic grey nomads is moderate to low due to their broad knowledge of destinations. Such a change in mobility can be seen in this grey nomad's comment about travelling along the Bruce Highway in Queensland:

*"We have visited Airlie Beach on past trips up here.....It's off the main road and out of the way.....There is no need for us to drive out of our way to go there. We'd rather just keep on going and spend our time elsewhere." (Grey nomad, No. 4)*

A semi nomadic grey nomad's length of stay at each primary destination varied from stays of one to two weeks, with some stays lasting as long as four weeks. The

primary destinations for semi nomadic grey nomads were not necessarily the same destinations that they had visited on past trips, but certain en route destinations were often frequently revisited due to certain attractions or financial benefit (e.g. cheap accommodation). If primary destinations were revisited, they were not usually visited in consecutive years, unless for the purpose of visiting family and friends. However, a small number of semi nomadic grey nomads visited the same destinations each year. These grey nomads tended be a cross between a fossicking enthusiast and a sun soaker, visiting both types of destinations and were primarily observed around the Sapphire and Rubyvale region. They spend a few weeks fossicking for gem stones and then the rest of their time is spent relaxing on the coast or vice versa. Mobility levels amongst semi nomadic grey nomads frequenting destinations they have visited in the past was generally low (i.e. the number of kilometres travelled in a day is kept to a minimum) at these destinations, similar to sun soakers and enthusiasts. Conversely, at newly visited destinations, daily mobility can be high as distant tourist sites were visited. Movement amongst most semi nomadic grey nomads gravitated towards coastal destinations where the longer stays usually occurred. Primarily, lengthy stays usually occurred in caravan parks, but they were not averse to camping for a week or more, either en route or at one of their primary destinations.

For many semi nomadic grey nomads the choice of an actual destination can be secondary to the desire to just get away and explore Australia and experience Australiana. Hence, it could be argued that Australia itself is their primary destination. As Oryx and Leonard (2005) discussed, for some grey nomads their trips can be conceived as a journey to find fulfilment in later life through the exploration of Australia and Australiana. Palmer (2000) in comparing Indigenous cultures to grey nomads also suggested that grey nomads may travel to help them spiritually reconnect to the land, similar to Indigenous people going walk-about. Therefore, it could be argued that their trips were no longer a trip to explore the country as a curiosity, but an exploration of what it means to be an Australian. Such a sentiment was expressed in this semi nomadic's comment:

*"We love to get out here in the bush and feel - you could say free. We have travelled extensively and every trip is a new experience. We don't do the tourist thing anymore. There is no need.....We travel to learn more about our country.....and to experience our unique nature*

*..... We love it.....and we get to appreciate what we have.....and talk about old times.” (Grey nomad, No. 28)*

Most semi nomadic grey nomads travelled in a large four wheel drive vehicle towing a medium to large sized caravan or a large motor homes and large converted buses. Approximately half of the grey nomads surveyed, who travelled in small motor homes and small converted buses, could also be placed in the semi nomadic category. Most semi nomadic grey nomads travelling in a motor home or converted bus tended to seek out free or low cost camping sites, rather than caravan park accommodation. Many of these grey nomads had identical traits to grey nomads in the budget classification, with similar demographic, mobility and expenditure characteristics. Furthermore, approximately half of those grey nomads with no fixed address had mobility characteristics of semi nomadics. The other half usually resided at one location and had sought part-time seasonal employment by travelling on a working holiday. Semi nomadic grey nomads rarely booked sites in caravan parks prior to the commencement of their trip. They will, however, book a site a few days before arrival if previous experiences had shown that securing a site may be difficult or sometimes camped close to town and arrive early in hope of securing a site.

Semi nomadics were generally over the age of 65 years. They were a mixture of self-funded retirees and those on government pensions. These grey nomads were highly sociable individuals and mingled with all groups of grey nomads. However, during ‘Happy Hour’, they tended to keep to themselves, but sometimes conversed with other semi nomadics and wanderers. Enthusiasts/sun soakers mingled with semi nomadic grey nomads during ‘Happy Hour’ at their specific destination, but only if semi nomadic grey nomads had an extended length of stay (i.e. month or more) at that destination.

Semi nomadic grey nomads had only moderate to low expenditure patterns dependant upon the destination visited. They rarely dined out, generally taking their meals with them, even when sightseeing. In addition, they only utilised large commercial tourist ventures when new to a region. They will rarely revisit the same attractions on future trips without just cause. They engaged in low cost activities like fishing (rarely on charter vessels), undertaking self-drive tours and relaxing. Hence,

their expenditure was higher at newly visited destinations compared to destinations that they have frequented in the past. Therefore, within the tourism circle, semi nomadic grey nomads were considered very low yielding visitors (i.e. low expenditure).

#### **9:4.4. Wanderers**

There were 202 surveyed grey nomads classified as wanderers. Wanderer grey nomads had the highest level of mobility and were a major segment of the grey nomad population. They had no one primary destination in a yearly trip. All destinations had some interest, including overnight stopover destinations. Their length of stay at a destination is generally a few days. Some stays, however, lasted up to one week, but never more than two weeks. They visited inland and coastal destinations, large and smaller centres/towns and camping areas. The mobility of wanderers whilst en route was moderate, but at a destination mobility could be high. They drove approximately 200-300 km a day whilst travelling en route, stopping at numerous attractions between destinations. Once at a destination, travelling a distance greater than a 100 km in a day was not a problem as they visited tourist sites on the periphery of towns and centres in which they temporarily reside. The majority will free camp throughout their trip with some camping stays lasting as long as a week, but stays were generally no more than one or two nights. Wanderers travelled in a mixture of vehicles ranging from motor homes, camper vans and large, often late model, four wheel drives towing a caravan or camper trailer. Most vehicles and caravans are designed to be self contained, providing the comfort and the necessities whilst camping. They visited destinations not frequented in the past, preferring to seek out new destinations and regions. They generally did not book ahead for a site in a caravan park unless they knew that securing a site was problematic. Hence, their travel itinerary was very flexible.

Wanderers were a mixture of young to medium aged grey nomads, although it was not unusual to have grey nomads in their late 60s in this group (i.e. those who retired at 65 years of age and have only been retired a few years). Wanderers were a mixture of self-funded retirees, those on long service leave and pensioners. They were

eager to travel and experience the variety of activities that were available. They used commercial tourist ventures, especially when new to a region (see Plates 9.6 a/b). The level of participation in commercial tourist ventures declined with repeat visits.

Wanderers, like most grey nomads, were conscious of their expenditure. Wanderers rarely dined out in restaurants or frequent coffee shops. They will, however, spend their money on commercial tourist activities (i.e. guided tours) and seek out attractions that provide an Australiana experience (i.e. both historical and natural) and/or noted curiosities (e.g. mining tours). Apart from the usual travel-related expenditure such as food and vehicle costs, most wanderers spent a considerable proportion of their travel budget on tours. In addition, most will take self-guided tours or will drive to the location and then take a tour if the option is available. For example, if a wanderer visited the Daintree area in Far North Queensland, they preferred to self-drive to that location, rather than take a tour starting in Cairns or Port Douglas. Once in the Daintree, they then joined a guided tour.

The emphasis of a wanderer's trip was to explore as much of Australia as possible. Their journey was destination-orientated and curiosity-driven compared to semi nomadic grey nomads whose level of curiosity at a destination level had been fulfilled on past trips. Hence, the journeys of semi nomadic grey nomads were more focused towards the trip itself (i.e. trip-orientated) and less towards the destination. The emphasis of a Wanderer's trip can be seen in this comment:

*"We've been planning to do this for years and now that we are retired there was no stopping us.....There is so much of Australia we want to see.....We'll be away for five months and we'll try and fit as much in as possible.....Five months is not going to scratch the surface of all the places we want to see. But we have time and what we can't see this time around we'll do next year or the ones after that.....We have time."*  
(Grey nomad, No. 33)

As wanderer grey nomads age, the number of trips they have undertaken generally increases, as well as their knowledge of attractions and destinations. Thus, the more trips a wanderer takes the more they become selective in their choice of destination. Hence their mobility will alter as the need to revisit certain attractions and



(a)



(b)

*Plate 9.6. Grey nomads visiting tourist attractions. (a): Wanderer grey nomads on a gem stone fossicking expedition at Rubyvale. (b): Wanderers on tour through the Qantas Jumbo Jet at Longreach. (Source: Cridland, 2005)*

destinations declines. The difference between semi nomadic grey nomads and wanderers, especially in mobility, was highlighted in this comment from one semi nomadic from New South Wales visiting Western Australia and travelling with a recently retired friend:

*"This is the third time we've been over to the west.....but we are travelling with another couple who have just retired and haven't visited up here before. They want to do all the touristy stuff which we've already done. We have no time to stop. It's just go, go, go.....It makes it difficult because if we want to stay at a place longer we can't. I have a boat and I'm not going to pull it off the roof just for a day.....We are not enjoying travelling at this pace. We don't like to be rushed.....We are not getting time to unwind and enjoy travelling and really take in the places we visit."* (Grey nomad, No. 11)

The majority of wanderers tended to become semi nomadic as they completed more consecutive trips. However, those wanderers who travelled on a limited budget, particularly those on a pension, may become budget travellers, seeking out camping destinations during future trips. In addition, some wanderers may become sun soakers, especially if they do not wish to travel so much as they age and if they can afford caravan park stays.

Wanderers travelled mostly as a couple in a single vehicle. In addition, occasionally members of large organised clubs were encountered touring. Wanderer grey nomads generally did not socialise during 'Happy Hour' in large numbers like enthusiasts and sun soakers, but gathered together in a group when activities or events (e.g. morning tea, barbecue, evening, bush poet) were organised by a caravan park proprietor (see Plate 9.7). Mings (1997) suggested that their high level of mobility limited their social interactions. Yet, many wanderers do frequently meet (unplanned) at different destinations during their travels and on different journeys, especially when travelling the same routes. This re-meeting fostered an environment for the development of a complex network of friendships. Some friendships, however, were only at the acquaintance level, although some became long-lasting and spanned the continent.



*Plate 9.7. Grey nomads in a caravan park at Winton. Many inland caravan parks during the winter month have bush poets reciting bush poems and stories on Australiana. In addition, for a small fee, meals are provided. (Source: Cridland, 2005)*

### 9:4.5. Adventurous

Forty-three surveyed grey nomads were classified as adventurous. These grey nomads sought remote locations or regions away from the normal tourist routes, usually off major highways and at least 50-100km or more from a settlement. There was very little difference between many wanderers and adventurous grey nomads. The only discernible differences were that adventurous drive themselves to (rather than taking a tour) and stay at remote and isolated destinations or regions for at least a week. There were two distinct groups: one small group observed staying for the entire winter at a remote camp ground on the banks of the Norman River in Far North Queensland (i.e. having one primary destination); and a second group which had high levels of mobility similar to wanderer grey nomads both en route and at a destination. The second group preferred to visit a remote region (e.g. Cape York Peninsula, The Kimberley), rather than a single location. Mobility levels for both groups of adventurous grey nomads were moderate when travelling en route. Adventurous grey nomads generally travelled approximately 300km a day when driving between destinations. Once at a destination, the adventurous grey nomads who travelled to a primary destination had very low mobility, similar to enthusiasts and sun soakers. Hence, the only major difference between these grey nomads and enthusiasts and sun soakers was the choice of destination. Conversely, the group with no primary destination, once at their destination, were willing to travel sizeable distances to visit nearby attractions. However, if camping was permitted at the distant attraction, many will generally move camp to the attractions rather, than commute for the day.

The average length of stay at a destination for an adventurous grey nomad whilst en route was usually a few days and rarely more than one week. They stayed in caravan parks, but only when travelling en route or visiting large centres. Adventurous grey nomads who travelled to a primary destination tended to stay at that destination for a number of months. The other group were those adventurous grey nomads who explored a region, generally staying within that region for a period of one to four weeks. Their trip to a remote region was generally incorporated into a longer trip, but the exploration of their chosen remote region was their primary travel goal. When not in a remote region, these grey nomads reverted to either a wanderer

or a semi nomadic grey nomad movement pattern, depending on the number of trips made in the past. Some semi nomadic grey nomads may have visited the region previously, but not travelled to the remoter part. A semi nomadic grey nomad, for example, may have travelled to Far North Queensland, but never ventured to the tip of Cape York Peninsula. The trip to Cape York was taken as a means of expanding their travelling experiences. Such movement was highlighted by this grey nomad's response:

*"We have been coming to North Queensland for a few years now and have talked about visiting the top (Cape York Peninsula) for sometime. We decided to do it this year to add some adventure to our trip – to do something different."* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 167).

The majority of adventurous grey nomads were less than 64 years of age. However, an older segment of the population in their sixties and early seventies was noted. These grey nomads usually belonged to the semi nomadic group who wished to expand their travel adventures by visiting remote regions. Adventurous grey nomads are almost solely self-funded retirees and generally had a high level of education. Males were either ex-tradespersons or self employed, whilst female grey nomads had a mixture of pre-retirement employment. This type of grey nomad enjoyed getting away from the usual tourist routes and avoided large commercial tourist ventures when in remote locations. They loved the isolation and the feeling of getting back to nature which visiting the outback provided. Like wanderers, they had a keen interest in Australiana, particularly the Australian landscape. In most cases, their motivation for the trip was destination-orientated, driven by a strong sense of adventure. Many considered the experience of travelling to remote regions a challenge. Such a sentiment can be seen in this adventurous grey nomad's comment about visiting the remote Kimberley region in Western Australia:

*"The Kimberley is an iconic place. We have seen documentaries on it and read a lot and thought we need to explore and experience it for ourselves.....We enjoy getting off the beaten track.....It is all a big adventure."* (Grey nomad, No 17).

Adventurous grey nomads often travelled in a small group, usually in two to three vehicles as husband and wife units (per vehicle). They socialised with other travellers in both caravan parks and camping areas, but tended to remain within their

group. Their expenditure was low and they rarely dined out during their travel when in towns and centres. Adventurous grey nomads who had no primary destination tended not to have high levels of repeat visitation and preferred to seek out new destinations. Conversely, those who travelled to a primary destination had frequented their primary destination on numerous occasions.

The adventurous grey nomads travelled mostly with a later model four wheel drive vehicles towing an all road or off-road caravan and/or camper trailer/tents. The adventurous grey nomads with caravans that were not suitable to be towed off the bitumen roads started their trip in a caravan, placing their caravan in storage and then tent it at remote locations. Planning for their trip to the remote region usually began up to twelve months in advance, but was not finalised until the trip to the region was complete. In other words, vehicle and routes were generally known before commencement of the trip, but stays at destinations were flexible. Hence, there generally was no set itinerary or movement. Like wanderer grey nomads, they booked ahead for a site in a caravan park when they knew that securing a site would be difficult.

#### **9:4.6. Budget**

Budget grey nomads as a category applied to 154 surveyed grey nomads. Budget grey nomads had the widest variety of mobility, ranging from a low to a rapid high mobility whilst en route. Once at a destination most movement was kept to a minimum. The mobility of budget grey nomads was similar to either semi nomadic or enthusiast grey nomads. They were usually well travelled with a diverse knowledge of destinations. The majority of budget grey nomads sought out free or low-cost camping areas and only stayed in caravan parks when the necessity arose (i.e. once a week to do washing). They avoided the large, resort-type caravan parks. Budget grey nomads found frequent stays in caravan parks either financially extravagant and/or the lack of space constricting to the point of being uncomfortable. Such a sentiment can be seen in these grey nomad's comments:

*'They're too expensive. Thirty dollars a night for what a slab of concrete, power and a shower and the state of some caravan parks leaves a lot to be desired. Many of us on a pension just can not afford that sort of money everyday'.* (Grey nomad, No.2)

*"They pack you in like sardines. You're living on each others door step. Look around here, we have space to move. We don't have to worry about anyone else.....Listen to the peace and quiet-no hustle and bustle you get in caravan parks."* (Grey nomad, No. 29)

The last quote highlighted that financial reasons were not the sole reason why budget grey nomads sought out camping locations. Some budget grey nomads enjoyed the serenity and freedom provided by camping.

In Queensland, a high proportion of budget grey nomads stated that they only travelled inland routes and would rarely visit the east coast, considering it to be over-priced and over-crowded. In addition, many camping locations on the Queensland coast had restrictions placed on the length of stays. Many inland camping areas also have similar restrictions, but were not as well policed. The restrictions and the policing of these restrictions, plus the popularity of the Queensland coast, deterred many camping grey nomads from visiting these locations. Such a sentiment can be seen in this grey nomad comment:

*"The [east] coast is too commercialized, overpriced and overcrowded. Too many councils are not camping friendly, not all but enough to stop us to going there."* (Grey nomad, diary comment No 15)

However, in Western Australia, budget grey nomads primarily stuck to coastal regions where there were numerous free and low-cost camping areas like show grounds and beach front camping. Budget grey nomads avoided large and tourist centres because they believed that these destinations were over-commercialised and the prices for many goods and services were overly inflated. If stays were required, budget grey nomads tended to only camp on the fringes of large and tourist towns and cities (if allowed). When camping was not permitted and they were forced to utilise caravan parks, they sought out budget caravan parks, avoiding resort-type accommodation. Furthermore, the movement of some budget grey nomads coincided with country events and festivals (e.g. Boulia Camel Races, Mareeba Rodeo). Events often provided budget grey nomads with cheap accommodation and entertainment for a few weeks (see Plates 9.8 a/b). Budget grey nomads, when not at an event, stayed at



(a)



(b)

*Plate 9.8. Camping grey nomads. (a): The free camping area at Boulia after the Camel Races. (b): Grey nomads camping on the banks of the Thomson River, near Longreach. Most of the grey nomads in this photo are Budget grey nomads.*  
(Source: Cridland, 2005)

roadside rest areas or in selected camping grounds. This type of movement, however, was only evident in Queensland.

A high number of budget grey nomads travelled in large motor homes or small to large converted buses, some towing small cars behind their motor home. However, the majority towed medium to large sized caravans behind a four wheel drive vehicle or large two wheel drive vehicle (so-called SUV). As mentioned in the semi nomadic section, many budget grey nomads in large motor homes and converted buses displayed similar movement patterns and characteristics of semi nomadic grey nomads. The difference lay in preferred accommodation. In the case of budget grey nomads, the majority sought out camping locations before choosing a caravan park. In contrast, semi nomadic grey nomads had little concern about where they stayed, with either caravan parks or camping areas being acceptable. The average length of a camping stay was a few days to approximately two weeks or longer dependant upon the location.

For many budget grey nomads on a pension, movement occurred in accordance with their pension allocation weeks. Therefore, once their fortnightly pension had been received and they considered it is time to move, they'll head to their next destination, waiting for the next pension week before moving again. The movement of grey nomads in accordance with their pension payments can be seen in this budget grey nomad's comments:

*"We don't have much and we don't need much. We can't afford to stay in caravan parks because we're on the pension, so we camp. When our pension comes through and if we feel its time to move on, we move on. There are a lot of us who do that". (Grey nomad, No. 6)*

The age of a budget grey nomad was generally over 65 years. Whilst most grey nomads were conscious of their expenditure, generally seeking money-for-value items and services, budget grey nomads were more money-conscious than most (Horneman *et. al.*, 2002). Saving money was not the sole reason for a budget grey nomad seeking camping locations. However, a high proportion of budget grey nomads travelled on a small and limited budget. Hence, they were the most vulnerable of all grey nomads to price increases, especially increases in petrol/diesel.

Most of these budget grey nomads were on a full pension (i.e. small income). The majority of male budget grey nomads were employed in manual labouring duties, the transport industry or as tradespersons prior to retirement. Females were primarily employed in home duties and manual labour. They rarely used large commercial tourist ventures and never dined out, with the exception of some grey nomads travelling in motor homes. Many budget grey nomads in motor homes and converted buses dined out and did their grocery shopping in small towns which they identified as budget grey nomad/camping friendly. Many of these grey nomads stated the reason for dining out and shopping in small towns was to reward these towns who “*open their doors to us and allow us to camp.....It's a way of paying these towns back*” (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 412).

Most of the 90 grey nomads that were living a full peripatetic lifestyle and had no permanent place of residence, of those, 49 indicated that they were or were at the time seeking temporary employment to help supplement their income. Only 23 grey nomads who had a permanent residence stated that they were seeking or were employed in some form of seasonal work whilst away. Not all of these grey nomads could be classed as budget grey nomads, but finding some seasonal work could help alleviate some budgetary constraints posed on grey nomads travelling on limited funding.

Budget grey nomads had a high tendency for repeat visitation to particular destinations. They visited the same camping destinations on consecutive trips. Constant stays at the same destinations each year fostered a network of friendships between similar budget grey nomads. Many budget grey nomads organised their trips to meet with fellow travellers at a selected destination. This network of meeting up with friends at certain destinations can be seen in this grey nomad’s comment:

*“We have been travelling for almost ten years and love the lifestyle.....Generally we go to the same places each year but we do mix it up.....The length of time we have been travelling and the way we move about, we do get to meet up with the same people all the time.....We all keep in constant contact, finding out what road conditions are like or where cheap diesel can be found.....Every now and again we'll organise to meet up at some location and talk about our travels - where we went – what we done?”* (Grey nomad, No. 23)

Even though they do not travel with other vehicles, budget grey nomads generally mixed easily with other camping grey nomads, sharing stories around the camp fire. However, most kept to themselves, although small groups of two couples sitting around a camp fire were common. They rarely had the opportunity to mingle with enthusiast and sun soaking grey nomads, with the exception of the enthusiast fishing grey nomads camping in Western Australia.

Planning facilities for camping grey nomads is problematic as exact numbers are difficult to obtain. During the survey of thirty-six camping grey nomads over a three day period directly after the 2006 census data, twenty stated that they did not complete the census form. All were willing to complete the census form, but had difficulty in obtaining forms prior to the census date. Hence, planners relying on census data to develop strategies to provide infrastructure for individuals who camp may underestimate the volume of camping in their region.

## **9:5. Changes in Grey Nomad Mobility**

This section will explain how changes throughout a grey nomad's travelling life will influence a change in their mobility. The first sub-section highlights the process which can occur to alter a grey nomad's perspective and throughout their grey nomadic life (see Figure 9.1). The second sub-section contains a matrix showing the attitude toward travel for each sub-population of grey nomads and their mobility (see Figure 9.2). In addition, Figure 9.2 also highlights the transition a grey nomad may take from one sub-population to another.

Not all grey nomads will follow this path identified in Figures 9.1 and 9.2. Enthusiasts and to a lesser degree sun soakers, especially if they have started living the grey nomadic lifestyle as a sun soaker, will generally not change their attitude and mobility characteristics throughout their travelling lifespan, as their trips had a strong activity-orientated focus. Grey nomads who are wanderers and adventurous, focus their trips around tourist destinations and tourism-orientated activities. Conversely,

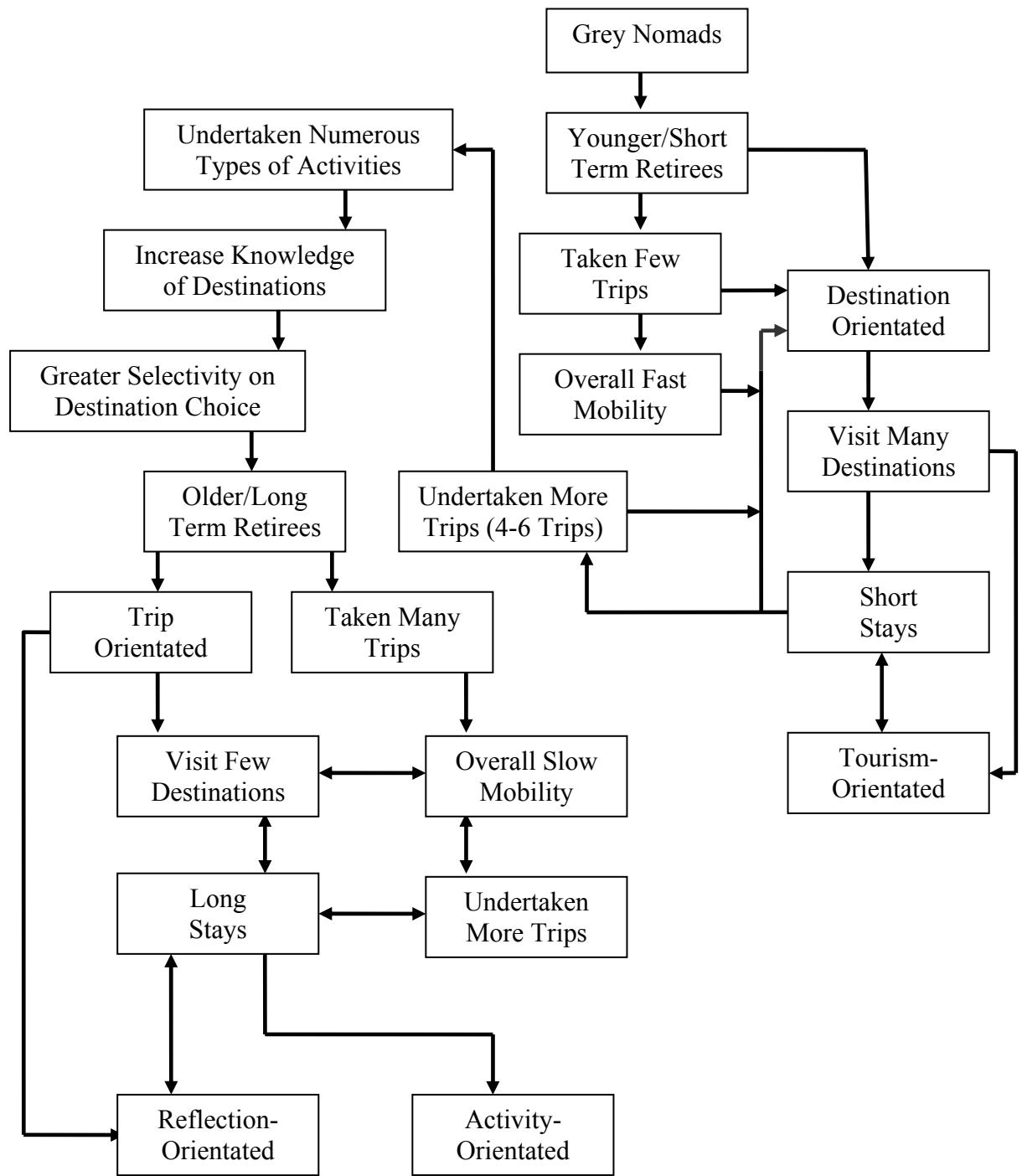


Figure 9.1. The mechanisms for a longitudinal change in grey nomad travel.

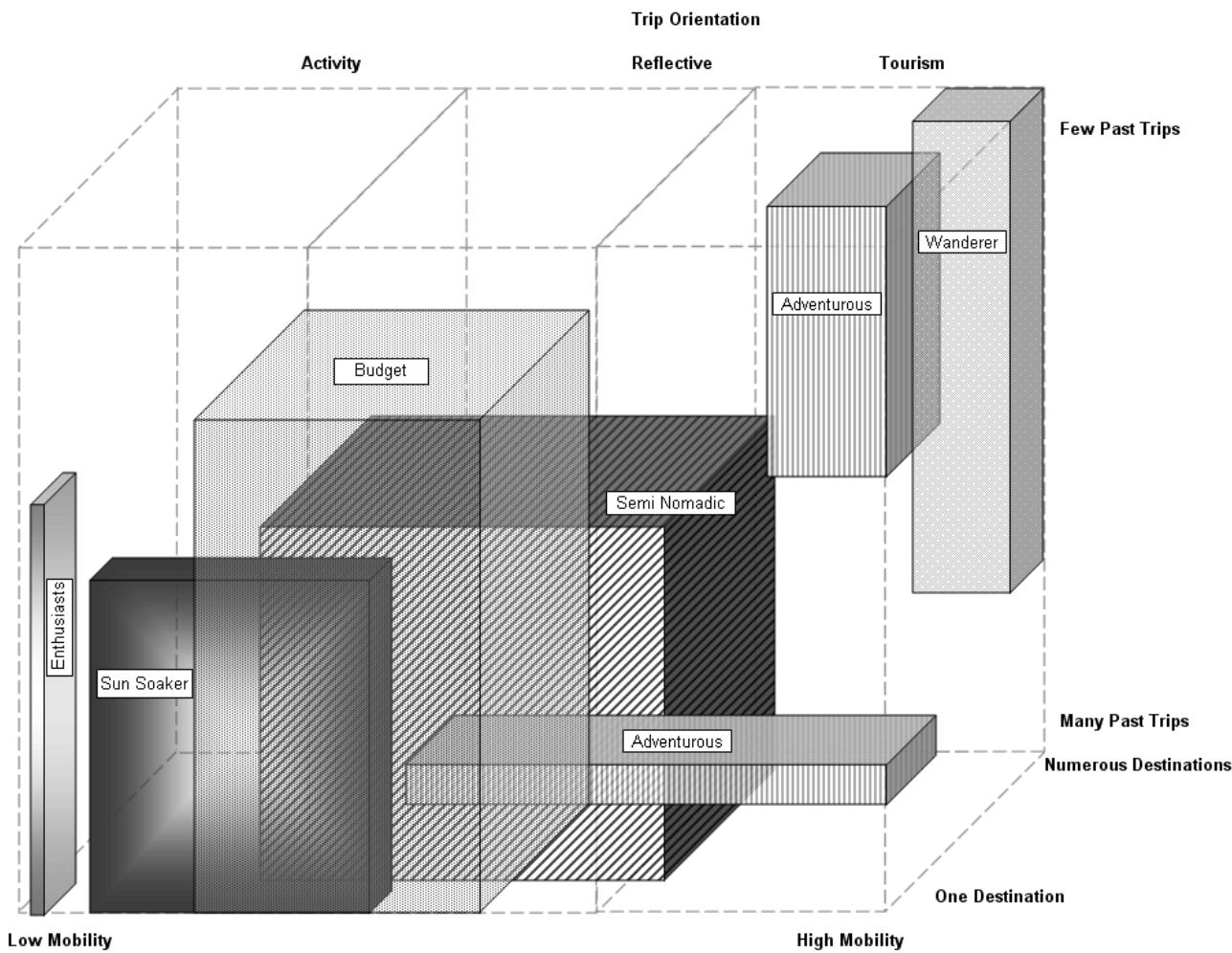


Figure 9.2. Trip-orientation/mobility matrix.

semi nomadic and many budget grey nomads usually take reflection-orientated trips where the focus of their travel is just to get away.

### **9:5.1. Longitudinal Change in Grey Nomad Mobility**

Upon retirement, an individual has the opportunity to become a grey nomad. They are no longer bound by the responsibilities of child rearing or the constraints of a nine-to-five/Monday-to-Friday employment lifestyle. Many of today's retirees now have the opportunity and resources to explore Australia to a greater extent than past aged generations. As Figure 9.1 suggests, grey nomads who have recently retired are eager to travel and wish to visit as many destinations as possible (i.e. their early phase of travel). These are usually the wanderer grey nomads. They have a strong desire to experience all that a destination offers, which can involve taking organised commercial tours. Visiting numerous destinations during a trip requires numerous short stays (i.e. usually no more than a week). Thus, a high level of overall mobility is required. However, as more trips are undertaken and more destinations visited, a grey nomad's perspective on travel changes, and they become more selective of destinations and attractions to visit, which is reflected in a slowing in overall mobility.

As the number of trips a grey nomad undertakes increases, they begin to develop a greater knowledge of routes and destinations, and what these destinations have to offer. Consequently, there is less of a need or desire to visit some locations and attractions (i.e. whilst en route or at a destination) as they have been visited on previous trips (see Figure 9.1). This decline in mobility usually occurs around the fourth to sixth trip. These attractions/destinations often lack the amenities to attract repeat visitation or are not located on major traffic thoroughfares. These locations are bypassed, as the "opportunities" that these destinations have to offer are not sufficient to warrant revisiting, compared to other locations further a field (Stouffer, 1940). As mentioned earlier, this change results in the slowing of overall mobility as only destinations that fulfil their travel needs are visited. A grey nomad's mobility at a particular destination slows usually on the third visit. Since fewer destinations are visited during a trip, stays at selected destinations tend to lengthen, sometimes lasting

longer than a month. Thus, the focus for these grey nomads is “to just get away” and to break up their normal retirement lifestyle, in addition to developing a sense of contentment in later life. This sentiment was also identified by Oryx’s and Leonard’s (2005) examination of the Ulyssean lifestyle amongst the grey nomad population. The need to partake in commercial tourist activities lessens as they have visited these attractions in past trips and further visits are unnecessary. This approach provides well-travelled grey nomads with additional time, which they usually spend relaxing or seeking other experiences. In addition, more time is spent on reflecting on life and connecting with fellow grey nomads. This type of movement and attitude towards travel is characterised by the semi nomadic and budget sub-populations. Evidence of this change in a grey nomad’s attitude towards travel and destination choice as more trips are undertaken can be seen in these grey nomads’ comments:

*“I have been retired for fifteen years now and we have only missed going away twice.....When we first started coming up here (Queensland) we tried to fit as much in to our trips as possible – We visited as many attractions and places as we could.....Some of the places were revisited, every now and again but other. Well we’ve been there-done that and there is no point in going back.....Now we just go to places that we like and meet up with old friends.”* (Grey nomad, No. 17)

*“We love getting away. Even though this is our eighth trip and we have everything down to a fine art, from packing the van, to hitching up – we have our routines, but it is still all a big adventure. We still get just as excited now about going away as we did when we made our first trip.....The only thing that had changed is that we have got a little older but also a little wiser about travelling and where to go and what to see and do.....We do have selected places that we go to that we have visited in the past, but other place we don’t – not that we visit them every year we like to mix and match.....Places like Yeppoon and Airlie Beach, we don’t bother calling into. They are nice places and we did enjoy ourselves there, but they are just too far off the main road and there is nothing there that we can’t get in other places on the coast.”* (Grey nomad, No. 14)

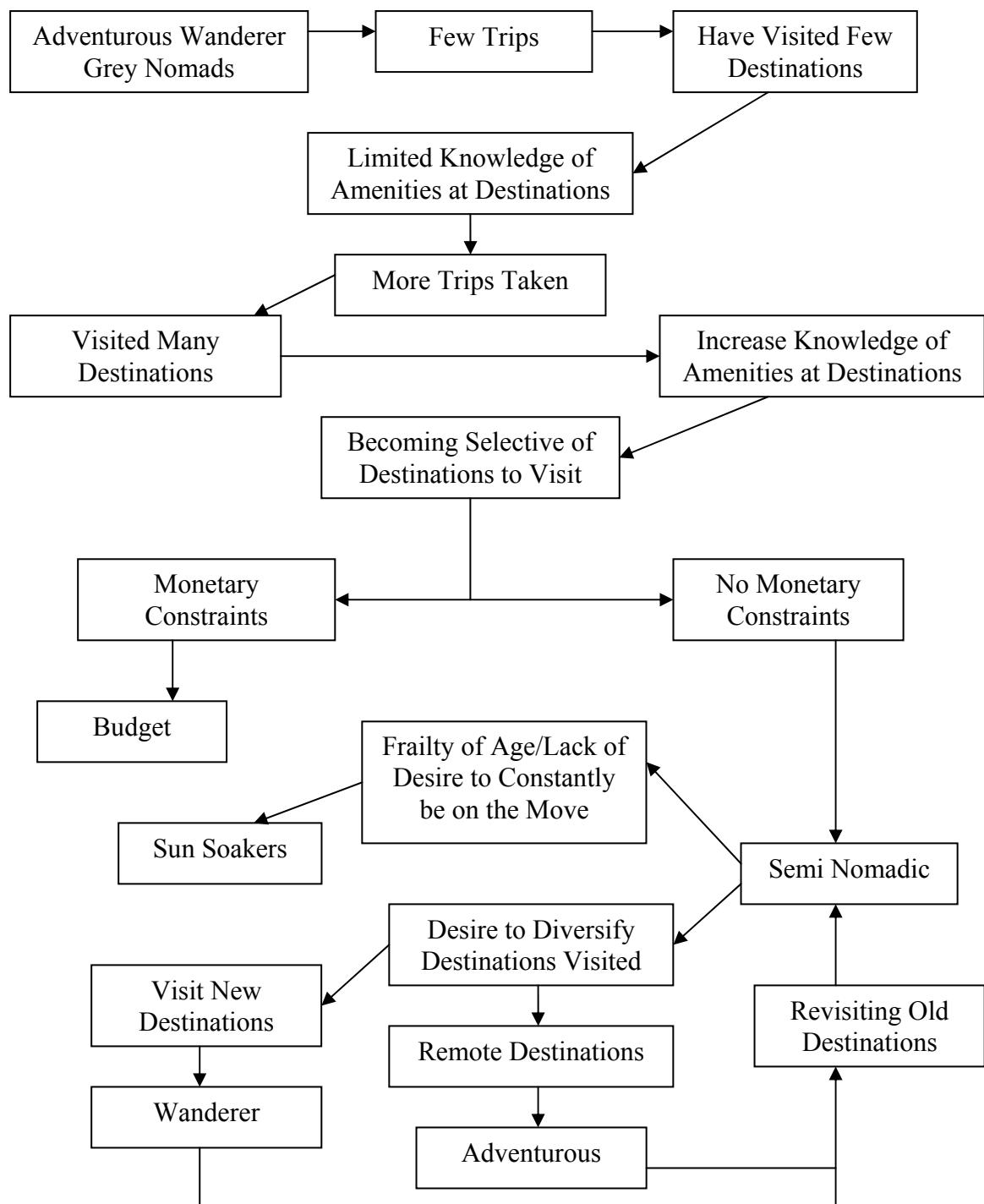
### **9:5.2. Mobility/Orientation and Sub-Population Matrix**

Different sub-populations of grey nomads have varying levels of mobility and differing attitudes towards travel. These differences are explained in a trip-orientation/mobility matrix (see Figure 9.2). This matrix highlights each sub-

population's trip-orientation against their mobility, in addition to the number of primary destinations they visited on their trip.

As mentioned previously, enthusiasts and some sun soaker grey nomads were the only sub-populations that would not generally move from one sub-group to another as their trip was orientated around a specialised activity like fishing or relaxing (i.e. activity oriented). Changes in sup-population may occur between luxury and beachcombers, but this change revolved around the choice of a different location to spend the winter. These changes usually occur following the closure of the caravan park regularly resided in during winter. If a change of location was required, most enthusiasts and sun soakers will generally sought out similar types of destinations that provided the same activities.

The majority of changes from one sub-population to another occurs in the wanderers and adventurous grey nomad populations. Almost all wanderer and adventurous grey nomads, if they continue undertaking extended winter trips north, will eventually change their mobility patterns. This change is a reflection of their changing attitude towards travel, as described in Figure 9.1. Furthermore, Figure 9.3 presents the mechanisms which may foster changes from one grey nomad sub-group to another. As the number of trips undertaken increases, wanderers and adventurous generally become either semi nomadic or budget grey nomads. Some wanderer grey nomads may become sun soakers, but this change only occurs late in the transition and generally relates to frailties of age and the decreasing desire to be constantly driving from one destination to another. Wanderers and adventurous grey nomads that are less financially secure or wish to get away from the confines of caravan park accommodation may become budget grey nomads, preferring to seek out camping destinations. However, the majority generally become semi nomadic. A semi nomadic grey nomad may revert back to a wanderer or an adventurous grey nomad when visiting a new destination/region, but their movements still tend to be slower than younger/recently retired wanderer and adventurous grey nomads. In addition, results from this study identified that a small number of older semi nomadic grey nomads seek out remote destinations to diversify their travel experience. Furthermore, wanderer and adventurous grey nomads also change from one group to



*Figure 9.3. Chart explaining the transition and path in which a grey nomad may change sub-population type.*

the other dependant on the choice of destination.

### **9:6. The Impact of Grey Nomad Mobility on Destinations Visited**

Planners need to be aware of the nature of visitation and the type of visitor frequenting a particular destination. Grey nomads are the main visitors to many destinations across northern Australia during the peak winter season, except for tourist centres like Cairns, Port Douglas and Airlie Beach. However, as caravan parks at these destinations fill with grey nomads throughout winter it is safe to assume that grey nomads do contribute a significant proportion of visitors to these destinations. Many towns and centres that grey nomads reside in or pass through rely on grey nomad expenditure as a supplementary income source and to create employment opportunities in these areas. Developing new tourist activities and re-establishing or revamping already existing attractions will bring grey nomads back year after year, including those who had visited these attractions in the past, thereby helping to bolster the economies of many regional destinations. In addition, destinations that do not have any significant attractions can attract grey nomads to their district by providing incentives such as affordable and well maintained camping areas. Mitchell and Injune, for example, provide a free nights' accommodation after a visitor stays a certain length of time, whereas destinations such as Mareeba and Barcaldine have opened their showground to travellers, providing low-cost accommodation. All these destinations have high grey nomad visitation numbers during the winter months.

Amongst tourism managers (e.g. Tourism NT, Tourism Queensland), grey nomads are considered low-yielding as their expenditure is low. Nevertheless, through sheer numbers they are still an important source of income for regional Australia. Grey nomads provide an economic boost for small businesses, in addition to creating employment in many locations where employment opportunities are limited. However, destinations that do not have sufficient infrastructure or services to deal with a rapid and sizeable increase in its winter population may suffer costs from grey nomad visitation.

In the Carpentaria Shire, grey nomads place a major drain on local services and infrastructure. Medical facilities, water supply and waste disposal services are generally stretched during peak visitation times (Gulf Region Development Committee, 2000; Greiner *et. al.*, 2004). The Normanton/Karumba area, with such a small permanent population, is ill-equipped for the three-to-five-fold increase in its population during the peak winter season. This sudden increase in population and the lack of infrastructure needed to service this increase is partially the reason why it cost the shire \$14.1 million to service visits in 2003, whilst tourists only injected \$11 million in the shire: a deficit of \$3.1 million that year (Greiner *et. al.*, 2004). Enthusiast grey nomads are the main visiting population to the Carpentaria Shire during winter. As Table 9.1 highlights, enthusiasts have one of the lowest levels of daily expenditure. They generally do not participate in commercial organised tours, preferring to limit their recreational activities to their chosen pursuits (i.e. fishing, fossicking). Enthusiasts travel with the equipment they need to undertake their preferred activities (e.g. boats, fishing gear, and gold detectors); hence, their expenditure is usually limited to accommodation and groceries. Their low expenditure is a major factor that contributes to this deficit. The Carpentaria Shire is also a favourite destination for many wanderer grey nomads, but site availability for these higher-yielding grey nomads is very limited. Many wanderer grey nomads visiting Karumba will utilise commercial fishing charters, injecting additional money into the local economy. However, wanderer grey nomads usually stock up with major groceries items before heading to the area, therefore, limiting the amount of money injected into the local economy. Planners need to take into account the size and type of temporary population which frequents a destination when planning the amount of infrastructure and services required.

The types of destinations that enthusiast grey nomads visit are highly vulnerable to loss of visitation if availability or access to that destination's desired resources becomes scarce. These destinations tend to be small coastal townships and to a lesser degree small inland destinations. These destinations are reliant on one particular type of activity, which in turn is highly dependent on a particular resource, usually an environmental resource like fish, gold or gem stones. If the resource in question becomes limited at a particular destination, enthusiast grey nomads will

change destinations to a location where that resource is more readily available. The destination of Karumba is a good example. Karumba is a primary destination for over a thousand fishing enthusiast grey nomads. The majority spend the entire winter months fishing, whenever the weather is right. Greiner *et. al.* (2004) estimated that recreational fishing in the area removed up to 330 tonnes of fish a year, which equates to the same mean yearly fish catch of Karumba's commercial fishing fleet. Grey nomads made up the bulk of the recreational fishing fraternity in the Karumba area. Many enthusiast grey nomads at Karumba stated that fish numbers over the last four to five years have declined, with some in 2005 already thinking of going to different destinations the following year. Some suggested that they would try out Cooktown now that the road was sealed with bitumen. This type of movement will see a change in caravan site availability and expenditure patterns at both destinations. An outcome of this change is that caravan sites at Karumba may become available for higher-yielding visitors. Conversely, Cooktown may lose caravan sites that were once available to high-yield visitors. Either way, economic impacts will be felt at both destinations.

Another problem which had become apparent over the last five years is the amount of space available within a caravan park, especially in caravan parks favoured by fishing enthusiasts. The majority of fishing enthusiast grey nomads take a small boat with a collapsible boat trailer to their destination. Once at their destination, the boat is placed on the trailer for the duration of their stay. Most wanderers, however, do not carry boats and if they do the boat generally remains on the roof of the vehicle when not in use. Caravan parks in fishing locations like Karumba and Lucinda, as with most destinations that attract fishing enthusiasts, need to provide not just space for visitors travelling with caravans and vehicles, but additional space for boat trailers. This increased use of space within a caravan park restricts manoeuvrability in laneways and around sites to both pedestrians and vehicles as boats on trailers clutter sites and congest these caravan parks.

Access to goldfields at Clermont is also a problem for gold fossicking grey nomads. Gold seeking grey nomads at Clermont have constantly asked the Queensland Forestry Department to open up new leases or areas on untouched Crown

Land, allowing greater access to virgin fields. Many enthusiast grey nomads at Clermont have stated their concern over the lack of access to gold fields and over crowding on land used by the general public for gold prospecting. Over crowding and access to gem stone fossicking areas, however, was not identified in the gem fields. At Clermont and Karumba, the needs of the visitors have to be addressed to promote further visitation, whilst sustaining the surrounding environment.

The natural beauty of Australia's landscape is an attraction which motivates grey nomads to travel and can promote repeat visitation to a particular destination year-after-year. However, many human-constructed attractions, once visited, may not foster the same level of enthusiasm for repeat visitation compared to the natural landscape. A possible reason for this lack of repeat visits to human-constructed attractions is that the natural environment is dynamic, constantly changing, whereas human-constructed attractions can be considered static, change slowly or vary little over time. Human-constructed attractions need to be frequently re-established or revamped to promote repeat visits. The inland city of Longreach is a prime example. The major tourist attractions of Longreach are the Qantas Museum and the Stockman's Hall of Fame. Many grey nomads who have visited Longreach in past years either pass through Longreach or when they do stay will not visit these attractions. Having visited them on past trips they don't wish to spend the money or time in seeing what they have seen before. Redevelopment and the renewal of these attractions, in addition to a nationwide marketing strategy, may help to entice repeat visitation to these destinations and attractions.

The extent of free camping is an issue for many destinations like Longreach. Many caravan park owners place pressure on local councils to restrict free camping in the proximity of the township. In the case of Longreach, most of the free camping grey nomads are repeat visitors and they only utilise Longreach as a stopover/rest type destination. The free camping area is located on the banks of the Thomson River, about five kilometres out of town. Data collected from this site showed that the average length of stay of a grey nomad at this camp site was two nights, whilst the longest stays were only five nights. If camping was restricted, the majority of free camping grey nomads would not stop at Longreach, possibly stopping instead at Ilfracombe or Barcaldine. Evidence from this study showed that average spending of

camping grey nomads is similar to those grey nomads in caravan parks, minus the cost of residing in a caravan park. Therefore, they still inject funds into the townships where they camp. A stop of a few days usually involves one major shop for basic groceries and possibly two tanks of fuel. This type of stopover could equate to over \$300 worth of spending in that town. However, if councils are to embrace camping they'll need to place more basic facilities at camp sites in order to tempt more grey nomads to stay longer (i.e. a few days). The importance of attracting camping grey nomads may increase, especially with the greater emphasis being placed on camping due to the increased costs associated with travel. Enticing camping grey nomads to stay for a few days, rather than just an overnight stay, may help offset the cost of maintaining camping/rest areas.

Free or low cost camping areas are becoming important for an increasing number of grey nomads as a money-saving option, especially as the price of fuel increases and caravan parks become over-crowded and over-priced. A high proportion of free camping grey nomads, as well as grey nomads in caravan parks, stated that they will seek free and budget camping sites more frequently on their future travels to offset increased travel costs (e.g. fuel prices). If free camping areas become overly restricted or unavailable, seasonal travel may become too costly for some grey nomads. In addition, certain grey nomads avoided many areas where restrictions on free camping were perceived to be harsh. For this reason, many free camping grey nomads avoid the east coast, as some cities like Bowen are viewed as traveller-unfriendly. This sentiment was particularly strong amongst grey nomads using large motor homes, budget and some semi nomadic grey nomads and those grey nomads who are living the permanent nomadic lifestyle. One grey nomad commented:

*“Bowen closed off all its camping areas. Now when we are travelling on the Bruce Highway we make sure that we have enough food and fuel to travel through the Bowen Shire. They don’t want us, they don’t get our money.”* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 184)

Camping grey nomads believed that they still required the basics like food and fuel and, therefore provide an income to the destinations they visited, regardless of whether they free camped or stayed in a caravan park.

Caravan parks in transient and rest/stopover destinations need to provide specialised/basic services. Many grey nomads travelling in a motor home and some with caravans spoke of the “*over inflated*” price of staying in caravan parks, especially in reference to overnight stays. A few grey nomads mentioned that a number of caravan parks charged an extra \$2 a night for a drive through site over a normal site cost (i.e. a site where the vehicle can still remain hitched to the caravan). Grey nomads considered that this opportunistic additional cost for a site had increased the numbers of grey nomads that free camped overnight, rather than staying in caravan parks. Such a sentiment can be seen in this grey nomad’s comments:

*“We have noticed over the last few years that more people are camping .....Its understandable, our costs are going up each year but our income isn’t.....The cost of staying in a caravan has jumped up \$10 a night, since 9/11.....they slug you for this and slug you for that but you don’t get anything more now than we got back then. They are trying to rip us off but they will soon learn when we all stop staying in their rotten little parks.”* (Grey nomad, diary comment No. 53)

Furthermore, some grey nomads stated that the price of an overnight stay on a normal site was too expensive and suggested a user pay tier system, with the price related to the types of services used within caravan parks. This tiered system would work on a basic rate for just a site, and the price would increase if other services like power, toilets, showers, etc. were required. Currently, sites are only tiered in accordance to having power or not having power or a concrete slab or not. A few grey nomads having an overnight stay in a camping area stated that they would stay in a caravan park overnight if some sort of user pay tier system was set in place. However, the creation of a user pay system at many caravan parks, especially in northern Australia, would render some caravan parks unviable due to the limited peak season of only four to six months at some destinations. Moreover, many of these parks have full or near full paying occupancy during the winter. Filling sites with a high number of low paying grey nomads that could be filled with full paying customers would not be an attractive option. However, the tiered option may have some merit in promoting greater use of caravan parks if the frequency of free camping increases due to rising travel costs.

If current grey nomad mobility patterns change and grey nomads begin to seek free camping locations, rather than stays in caravan parks, many towns that were once transient/stopover destinations may suffer a decline in visitation. Most of these destinations do not have any major attractions for grey nomads, apart from providing accommodation to passing traffic. Many of these destinations that once attracted grey nomads may be bypassed due to rising travel costs and the increased emphasis on camping as the need to lower travel expenditure becomes greater. Small towns like Mitchell, Injune, Mareeba and Barcaldine provide low cost sites within caravan parks, open the show grounds or offer free nights (i.e. pay for X amount of nights, get X free) as an incentive to attract grey nomads. Since most grey nomads are budget-conscious, the idea of getting something for nothing brings grey nomads to these destinations. These destinations have become an important stopover and, in some cases, a primary location for grey nomads travelling throughout inland Australia. Providing an incentive to stay longer at a destination can increase the level of expenditure per grey nomad at that destination and may help grey nomads counteract rising travel costs and ward off a decline in visitation.

Another major issue for grey nomads, especially sun soaker grey nomads, is the number of caravan park closures. Over the last five to seven years, the number of caravan park closures has increased, with the greatest closures occurring along the eastern seaboard. Many of these caravan parks are being redeveloped, as either new housing sub-divisions or as tourist resorts/units, in the attempt to attract the high-yield short-stay market. These closures restrict site availability at a destination, resulting in higher demand on remaining sites in other caravan parks. If site availability becomes too difficult, grey nomads will just bypass these destinations. Evidence of this behaviour by grey nomads is occurring in Far North Queensland, with grey nomads preferring to stay at Mareeba rather than Cairns due to park closures. Furthermore, if sites once available to sun soaker grey nomads are no longer obtainable, they will seek other destinations which will fulfil their needs. This change will have an impact on the new destination. As sun soakers generally reside at the one location for the entire winter, any sites they take at a new destination will no longer be available for other grey nomads, like wanderers. Therefore, expenditure patterns at that destination

may decline as the number of higher yielding wanderer grey nomads (i.e. short staying) decrease due to lack of available sites.

Increasing numbers of grey nomads camping is contributing to environmental degradation. The disposal of waste products at camping areas that lack basic facilities has become a concern (Pederson, 2002). Most grey nomads are environmentally conscious about their impact on the natural landscape. Field observations indicated that grey nomads dispose of their own rubbish (and collect the abandoned rubbish of other less environmentally-conscious travellers) and use bio-degradable chemicals both during the washing of clothes and in their porter-potties (i.e. portable toilets), which they empty at designated dump sites (see Plates 9.8 a/b). Most camping grey nomads stated that the majority of mess at camping areas was generally caused by locals and international visitors. Clearly, the lack of facilities at some localities has resulted in the increased unsanitary disposal of human waste (as seen in Plate 6.2). Numerous rest areas that have no toilet facilities, especially in Western Australia, are littered with human waste and toilet paper. A problem also exists with the disposal of grey water at some camping locations. Many budget and some semi nomadic grey nomads who camp for extended periods along permanent streams construct external showers systems (see Plate 9.9). Grey water from these showers is often channelled towards the stream or away from the camp site. The runoff doesn't usually make it to the stream, but it does enter the water table, which in turn may add nutrients to the underground water system. Councils may need to construct some basic amenity blocks in camping areas. Even cold water showers would help limit this type of environmental degradation (Dahlitz, 2005). Vandalism does become a problem at sites, but during the peak season the majority of camping sites across northern Australia are well policed by grey nomads. In Western Australia, many councils and the Western Australian National Parks appoint grey nomad caretakers to police and maintain camping areas.

There is no crystal ball that will tell planners what will happen to the numbers of grey nomads and their movement in the future and how future trends may impact on services and service providers. However, the cost for grey nomads to undertake extended winter journeys has risen and travelling has become more difficult in recent



(a)



(b)

*Plate 9.9. Porter-Pottie dump sites (a): A newly constructed dump site in a rest area between Cloncurry and Normanton. (b): A dump site within a caravan park in Townsville. (Source: Cridland 2005)*



*Plate 9.9. External showers (cycled) erected outside one grey nomad's caravan and another outside a motor home at Fletcher's Creek near Charters Towers.*

(Source: Cridland, 2005)

years because of increased caravan park closures, increased demand for sites within remaining caravan parks and restrictions on camping. The cost of travel is not likely to decline in the long-term and in the short-term the numbers of grey nomads will probably increase, placing greater demands on infrastructure and services. These ‘intervening obstacles’ on movement may impede on future grey nomad numbers. Planners should heed the words from the movie *Field of Dreams* (1989) starring Kevin Costner: “*build it, and they will come*”. Most grey nomads relayed an opinion that they do not require much to make them content and they don’t expect something for nothing. Providing incentives (e.g. improved services; camping areas) to attract grey nomads to visit and stay at a particular location may counter any ‘intervening obstacles’ placed on travel, such as rising fuel costs. Furthermore, promoting increase visitation may ensure that regional economies receive the financial benefits visiting grey nomads can provide.

### **9:7. Conclusion**

This chapter explored grey nomads’ thoughts on travel. Results from field observations and interviews with grey nomads suggested that many were concerned about the rising cost of travel, especially the increase costs in fuel and accommodation, and how it would influence their future travels. Whilst many grey nomads harbour concerns, most were adamant that they would still undertake extended winter travel, finding ways to reduce their overall travel expenditure. Responses from grey nomads suggested that many would begin to consider any or all of the following: free camp in greater frequency; stay longer at preferred destinations or; not travel as far north compared to past trips.

The level of social interaction between grey nomads was also explored in this chapter. The level of social interaction between grey nomads was closely aligned to a grey nomad’s mobility. Grey nomads choosing to reside at the one destination for the entire winter tended to interact more with grey nomads with similar mobility. Little interaction occurred between long staying grey nomads and those visiting for a short length of time. Frequent interaction amongst long staying grey nomads can lead to the development of strong social bonds with similar grey nomads, which in turn can

foster a bond to a particular destination and a sense of ownership towards that location (Kyle *et. al.*, 2004; Hall, 2005; Larsen *et. al.*, 2006). This sense of belonging or ownership can be a strong mechanism for repeat visitation. The interaction between short and long stay visitors was, however, made difficult as many caravan parks segregated long staying visitors and short staying visitors in different sections of the caravan park. As a result, grey nomads who were residing for short duration were often looked upon as itinerant by those who stayed for extended periods. In addition, the short stays limited the opportunities to interact. However, grey nomads who have short stays at numerous destinations frequently met and re-met the same grey nomads at different destinations and in different years. This interaction can also develop into a friendship with names and addresses being exchanged.

This chapter examined the different sub-groups of grey nomads. These groups are: enthusiasts, sun soakers, semi nomadic, wanderers, adventurous, and budget grey nomads. Whilst many of these groups had similar characteristics, differences in either choice of destination and type of activities undertaken, in addition to their nature of social interaction and mobility, allowed for the identification of separate sub-populations. It should be noted that each sub-population consumed different types and levels of services and had differing motivations for travel. These differences in grey nomads resulted in different benefits and costs for host communities.

Mechanisms influencing a change in a grey nomad's mobility were identified in this chapter. The mechanisms fostering a change from one sub-population were factors such as age, the number of past trips undertaken, the type of activities they partake in, and their level of retirement income. Grey nomads who were newly retired are keen and eager to explore and visit as many destinations as possible. As grey nomads grow older and undertake more trips their mobility slows and they become more selective of destinations to visit. This slowing in mobility results in longer stays at fewer destinations and the number of tourist related activities undertaken also declines. These changes in mobility, activities and choice of destination can prompt a grey nomad to change from one sub-group into another.

Lastly, this chapter explored the implications for changes in a grey nomad's mobility on destinations in regional Australia. As the cost of travelling increases, some grey nomads will alter their movement pattern to lower their overall trip expenditure. Any changes may result in some destinations facing increased demand on sites, whilst some destinations will have reduced visitation; others may be bypassed altogether. Destinations across regional Australia if they are planning effectively need to firstly encourage grey nomads visitation, and secondly entice these elderly visitors to stay for long periods. Promoting stays of up to a week will maintain a turnover of grey nomads and keep money being injected into the local economy.

## **Chapter Ten**

## **Conclusion**

### **10:1. Introduction**

Grey nomads have been a neglected topic of study until quite recently. Most research into grey nomads has examined them from a tourism marketing perspective, as a segment of the self-drive and grey tourism market. Other research has looked at the socio-demographic characteristics of grey nomads, but almost solely in a caravan park setting, excluding those grey nomads who favour alternative types of accommodation, particularly camping. These studies have also treated grey nomads as a homogenous population and have not identified the possible differences in socio-economic/demographic characteristics within the population and how this may influence mobility and choice of destinations. Before now, no sizeable study had been completed on mobility and the factors that influence variation in movement patterns within the grey nomad population. This project, therefore, had five main objectives:

- to examine the various socio-economic (i.e. type of retirement income; employment prior to retirement; type of vehicle) and demographic characteristics (i.e. age; gender; marital status; education level) and mobility patterns (i.e. numbers of kilometres travelled daily en-route and at the final destination; number of repeat visits and activities at a destination) of grey nomads;
- to determine the factors (i.e. fuel costs; direction of journey; retirement income) influencing different mobility patterns amongst grey nomads;
- to identify the different sub-groups or categories within the grey nomad population;
- to explain how various grey nomad population characteristics and their travel experiences (e.g. number of trips since retirement; age), in addition to other external factors (e.g. rising fuel cost, caravan park closures) influenced current and possible future grey nomad mobility patterns and;

- to suggest the planning implications for the presence of current and possible increased grey nomad visitation to regional Australia.

This chapter will discuss areas where this study has helped fill the current gaps in knowledge regarding the seasonal movement of senior Australians to northern Australia during winter.

## **10:2. Differences in Grey Nomad Socio-Economic/Demographic Characteristics**

A review of the scholarly literature identified limited knowledge about grey nomads who reside outside caravan parks. In addition, apart from the ethnographic study by Onyx and Leonard (2005; 2007), most research on grey nomads had been undertaken in Queensland, with very little analysis conducted on grey nomads visiting the Northern Territory and Western Australia. Therefore, knowledge regarding the variation in population characteristics of grey nomads and their movement patterns within and across state and territorial boundaries of northern Australia was limited. In this project, grey nomads were surveyed at various types of locations across northern Australia, including camping areas and caravan parks situated in large and small inland and coastal service towns and centres, as well as major tourism centres. Hence, results presented in this thesis have provided, for the first time, quantitative and supportive qualitative data regarding the socio-economic/demographic status and movement patterns of grey nomads visiting different types of destinations across northern Australia.

An initial review of this project's results found similar demographic findings to previously published studies undertaken on grey nomads (Pollard, 1996; Mings, 1997; Onyx and Leonard, 2005). A more thorough examination of the data, however, revealed marked differences between camping grey nomads and those who preferred stays in caravan parks. Most camping grey nomads had caravan park stays sometime during their travels, but the evidence from this study indicated that they sought out camping locations wherever possible. Varying socio-economic/demographic factors such as a grey nomad's age, the level of trip expenditure, the type of retirement income (i.e. full or part pension, self-funded), health and the length of their retirement

influenced the desire or need (or both) to reside at either a camp ground or in a caravan park. Other factors that determined whether a grey nomad camped or resided in a caravan park included the type of vehicle driven, the availability of pet-friendly caravan parks at a destination and the type of activities undertaken at a destination. The identification of these major differences amongst grey nomads who preferred to camp or stay in caravan parks indicated that they were not a homogenous population and that planners need to provide infrastructure catering for the specific needs of all types of grey nomads.

A grey nomad's socio-economic/demographic characteristics determined the types of primary destinations they visited. Grey nomads employed in management and professional positions favoured tourist orientated, large coastal towns and cities as their primary destination. Younger/newly retired individuals visited these types of destination in high numbers. Older grey nomads (i.e. ages 70 years and over) or grey nomads who were ex-trade persons, usually preferred to reside in small coastal towns. This study also identified that a high number of older grey nomads frequented large inland towns and cities. These grey nomads tended to be semi wanderers, resting at these locations for one to two weeks before moving to their next preferred destination.

### **10:2.1. Difference in Expenditure**

This research has concluded that expenditure patterns varied amongst different segments of the grey nomad population. Camping grey nomads had lower daily expenditure compared to those staying in caravan parks. Furthermore, grey nomads visiting large coastal and tourism centres had the highest levels of daily expenditure compared to those grey nomads visiting other types of destinations such as small coastal towns, and large and small inland towns and centres. This result is not surprising as the greater proportion of services (e.g. shops, mechanical services) and attractions are generally located in or near large coastal destinations and cities and towns dependant on tourism. However, the level of expenditure at these destinations varied in relation to the nature of visitation. Younger grey nomads who are newly retired and visiting this type of destination tended to have shorter stays and tried to

partake in numerous tourist related activities. These grey nomads had higher levels of daily expenditure whilst visiting that destination. In contrast, older and more travelled grey nomads, who had a past history of visitation to same destination, tended to have lower levels of daily expenditure compared to their younger cohorts. In addition, the length of stay increased with repeat visitation. These grey nomads had undertaken most of the activities that the destination offered and have been unwilling to revisit the same place again. The decline in desire to revisit certain attractions can lower their expenditure. They also had greater time to explore that destination, so there was no need to rush and partake in costly tourist-related activities.

Grey nomad expenditure varies depending on the type of retirement income. Grey nomads on a full pension, with less available income had lower levels of daily expenditure compared to grey nomads who were self-funded or on a part-pension. These results correlated with the level of expenditure at a destination. Grey nomads on a full pension had a higher instance of camping than grey nomads who were self-funded or on a part-pension. Moreover, grey nomads receiving a full pension also avoided destinations that they considered to have over-inflated costs, like many tourism destinations and certain large inland and coastal centres. Understanding the expenditure patterns of grey nomads may assist planners to formulate the net benefits or costs visiting grey nomads impose on local economies. Additionally, targeting a particular type of grey nomad may assist in improving the amount of expenditure at a particular destination.

This project also provided insights into the cost of travelling en route to a destination in comparison to the cost of staying at a destination. The daily cost of transiting between destinations was found to be significantly greater than the cost of staying at a destination. These differences were found to be significant for both grey nomads camping and those preferring to reside in caravan parks. This result may explain possible future movement patterns amongst grey nomads. Indeed, some grey nomads surveyed in this study suggested that they may consider having longer stays at certain destinations to counter the impact of rising travel costs. Grey nomads extending their stays at popular destinations will impact on the rate of site turn-over at those destinations. Reducing the rate of site turn-over, especially at popular

destinations (e.g. Broome; Exmouth), places greater demand on the availability of sites in caravan parks, thereby making securing a site more difficult. Such a lack of site availability may reduce the desire amongst some grey nomads to take future trips if they cannot stay at their chosen destinations. Furthermore, McKercher's (2001) study on the different levels of daily tourist expenditure at a destination concluded that when the length of an individual's stay at a destination increases, their level of daily expenditure declines. This project identified a similar link between daily expenditure patterns amongst grey nomads and to length of stay. Therefore, if grey nomads have lengthier stays at popular destinations, the amount of daily expenditure at that destination will decline. Reducing daily expenditure will impact on the amount of money visiting grey nomads will inject into the economy of host communities.

### **10:3. Contribution to Population Geography in Australia**

This project has contributed to the study of population geography in Australia by providing insights into the theories regarding the mobility of grey nomads across northern Australia. Zelinsky (1971) in his 'The Hypothesis of the Mobility Transition' examined how a society's mobility would change as it moved through the demographic transition. In 1971 when Zelinsky formulated his hypothesis, only developed countries had characteristics that placed them in his 'advanced societies' (Phase IV). No societies at that time were classified as being in the Phase V, 'future super-advanced society' of his mobility transition. However, many developed countries, such as Australia, are now starting to display similar characteristics highlighted by Zelinsky's super-advanced society. Zelinsky (1971: 231) stated that "acceleration in some current forms of circulation and the inceptions of new forms" may occur during the Phase V of his mobility transition, although he did also state that residential forms of circulation may decline. In 1971, the grey nomad phenomenon was in its infancy. The economic prosperity and improved infrastructure and technologies experienced by Australia in the post World War Two era has produced an environment which has seen an expansion in the numbers of grey nomads. This project identified that grey nomads are aware of the future problems associated with prolonged seasonal travel, such as rising fuel costs and overcrowding

at destinations, although many stated that they still intended to continue this type of circular movement. Hence, results from this study supports Zelinsky's (1971) hypothesis that some forms of circulation, especially leisure mobility in the case of grey nomads, will increase in a 'super-advanced society', although the longer term future of the grey nomad phenomenon is uncertain.

Stouffer's (1940) theory of 'intervening opportunities' is not a relevant theory to explain the movement patterns of all grey nomads. The desire for some grey nomads, especially wanderers and semi nomadics, to visit multiple destinations negates any intervening opportunities that would impact upon or influence their mobility. In contrast, Stouffer's theory may have some significance amongst grey nomads who only travel to a single primary destination, especially as the cost of taking a winter trip increases and caravan parks in far northern areas continue to close. Some grey nomads concerned with park closures and rising fuel costs were considering residing in sub-tropical destinations, rather than driving the extra distances to reside in the tropics. Caravan park closures force the break up of residing social groups and add a negative aspect to that destination. Furthermore, some grey nomads considered that certain sub-tropical destinations provided similar or better benefits than destinations further north. Thus, the movement of these particular grey nomads to tropical Australia may cease as they prefer to reside at closer destinations to their original point of departure. This result indicates that Stouffer's (1940) theory of 'intervening opportunities' does not explain all types of movement, especially movement involving visitation around multiple destinations. However, in regards to single destination movement patterns, Stouffer's (1940) theory of 'intervening opportunities' can provide an explanation for some changes in grey nomad mobility.

Lee's (1966) theory of 'intervening obstacles' can describe the environment that has seen the growth of the grey nomad phenomenon. Over the last 20 years, the obstacles limiting extended self-drive travel in Australia have declined. Improvements in road and communications networks across Australia have opened many remote and regional areas to grey nomad visitation. Furthermore, the prosperity of Australia's economy in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has seen many current retired Australians more financially secure and in better health than previous aged

generations. In addition, the improvement in the construction and comfort of motor homes and caravans has made travelling for an extended period more pleasurable. Hence, today's retirees have the funding and ability, as well as the opportunity to travel for a prolonged period with comfort and ease. Such opportunities were not available to retirees in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, thereby inhibiting extended seasonal travel for earlier aged-generations. However, the cost of travelling, difficulty in obtaining a site in caravan parks and over crowding may become intervening obstacles that can impede future movements.

#### **10:4. Contribution to the Knowledge about Grey Nomad Mobility**

Limited scholarly literature exists regarding grey nomad mobility and what factors alter movement patterns. Mings (1997) is the only researcher to investigate aspects of grey nomad mobility, but he only sampled grey nomads residing in caravan parks in Far North Queensland. No camping grey nomads were included in his study. Furthermore, Mings' (1997) results on grey nomad mobility only indicated overall averages and did not identify whether variations in mobility existed within the grey nomad population. This project furthered the work by Mings (1997) by identifying differences in mobility within the grey nomad population. In addition, this study examined whether socio-economic/demographic characteristics, travel experience and destination type will influence a change in movement patterns.

For the first time, data has been gathered on the mobility patterns of grey nomad who camp, in addition to those who prefer to reside in caravan parks. The results from this study indicate that camping grey nomads on average travel approximately 100 km less in a day when en route to a new destination than grey nomads residing in caravan parks. Furthermore, camping grey nomads tended to travel less kilometres in a day once at a destination than those in caravan parks. Hence, camping grey nomads have a slower overall mobility and take longer trips than grey nomads who resided in caravan parks for much of their journey. This slower movement may explain why camping grey nomads are generally away from

their usual place of residence longer than grey nomads who prefer to reside in caravan parks.

Results from this study indicate that grey nomads travelling in different modes of transportation (e.g. motor homes, caravans) have a different mind set towards staying at particular types of accommodation (i.e. camping or caravan park). This mind set is aligned with the level of occupation/use and the cost of sites within a caravan park. Grey nomads travelling in motor homes favoured camping type accommodation, rather than stays in caravan parks. One of the major reasons for the high instance of camping amongst grey nomads driving motor homes was that their vehicle was both their accommodation and mode of transport. Caravan park sites booked by grey nomads driving motor homes were generally left unoccupied when sightseeing, which motor homers considered not to be good value for money - paying for something that is not being occupied. Grey nomads towing camper trailers preferred to camp in remote and isolated destinations, as camper trailers are purposely built to visit these types of locations. However, no significant statistical difference existed for grey nomads with caravans inn preference to camping or staying in a caravan park, with high numbers recorded in both types of locations. Unlike grey nomads in motor homes, a grey nomad's caravan is not their primary vehicle and can be left on-site when sightseeing. Knowledge of accommodation preferences and factors influencing the decision to camp or reside in a caravan park may assist tourism planners provide a particular accommodation type to certain niche groups of grey nomad.

This project has identified the highway and road networks used by grey nomads throughout their travels. For the first time, route maps have been produced showing highway and road usage which identified the proportion and directional flow of grey nomads from the original state of departure. The routes taken by a grey nomad can be assigned to one of the five trip route typologies proposed by Lue *et. al* (1993). The majority of the movement was either 'single destination', 'en route', 'regional tour' or 'trip chaining' patterns, with very little 'base camp pattern' being identified. A sixth pattern, however, was identified: 'alternate return route pattern'. This type of movement was adopted by many grey nomads from the eastern states and

South Australia visiting Darwin, either as a primary destination or as one of many primary locations. The identification of this route pattern has no major planning implication, although it does highlight that some grey nomads, especially those travelling to and from one primary destination, do seek a change in routes and scenery during their trip.

The route maps also introduced the term climatic determinism into grey nomad mobility. The prevailing westerly winds across the Nullarbor Plains, the south-easterly trade winds in the eastern states and the southerly winds which blow through central Australia during winter all influence the direction grey nomads choose to travel. Travelling against these winds is deemed to be time consuming and adds additional costs to travelling. Thus, most grey nomads, when possible, prefer to travel with the wind, as opposed to against it. Therefore, journeys like the traditional trips around Australia are generally undertaken in an anti-clockwise direction, utilising the prevailing wind patterns; ‘keeping the wind to their backs’.

This project has furthered the knowledge on how the distribution of destinations can influence grey nomad mobility. In Chapter Two, a figure showing how the number and distribution of destinations across the landscape may alter movement between destinations is presented. This hypothesis proposed that grey nomads would travel a greater number of kilometres in a day to arrive at their next preferred destination in regions where the number of destinations were few and widely distributed. Evidence suggests otherwise. Grey nomads drove similar amounts of kilometres in a day when en route regardless of the distribution of destinations. In other words, despite the greater distances between destinations in Western Australia and the Northern Territory, grey nomads travelling in these areas drove similar distances in a day when en route as grey nomads driving in Queensland, where the destinations are closer together. However, grey nomads who visit Western Australia tended to stay longer, on average, at their chosen destination than grey nomads visiting destinations in Queensland. These findings suggest that when there are a few widely dispersed destinations, grey nomads tend to have longer stays at a destination compared to areas where destinations are numerous and closely clustered.

This study identified that the majority of grey nomad movements gravitated towards the coast. At coastal destinations grey nomads had longer stays (often multiple weeks/months) compared to destinations located inland (generally no more than a week), regardless of the type of destination. This result is understandable as most grey nomads considered that coastal regions provided a more pleasing environment for extended stays than most inland destinations. Furthermore, when stays occurred at inland destinations, the length of stays varied depending on the size of the destination and the level of infrastructure and services available at that destination. Grey nomads visiting large inland destinations (e.g. Longreach or Emerald) tended to stay a few days longer, as small inland towns do not provide incentives for longer stays. The latter destinations were only ever used as overnight transient locations.

This study also identified that the location of a caravan park at a particular destination attracted a particular type of grey nomad. Observations at Bowen found that a caravan park adjacent to a golf course attracted grey nomads who enjoy playing golf. In contrast, a caravan park close to a lawn bowls club attracted a high percentage of grey nomads who played lawn bowls. These different clustering of small groups of grey nomads within a destination showed that the choice of caravan park can be influenced by the nearby attractions and/or infrastructure.

Results from this project showed the spatial relationship between chosen destination(s) and the point of original departure (i.e. place of usual residence). Mings (1989) identified that the movement of North American snowbirds had a strong longitudinal correlation (i.e. movement primarily north – south and not east – west or vice versa). Until now, this type of movement has not been fully tested in relation to grey nomad movement. Results from this study indicated a similar pattern of movement occurs amongst grey nomads in Australia. Examination of the routes taken by grey nomads show that the majority of Western Australia grey nomads tended to travel solely within Western Australia, while the grey nomads from the eastern states and the Australian Capital Territory predominately visit Queensland. Most South Australian grey nomads surveyed visited the Northern Territory, but will include either Western Australia or Queensland and New South Wales in their travels, either

as an alternative route home or as part of their overall travel. The number of cross continental movements amongst grey nomads was minimal.

Findings from this study support many of the theories posed by Oryx and Leonard (2005; 2007) regarding the motivation for grey nomads to undertake extended trips. However, an examination of the responses from grey nomads surveyed in this study identified that the motivation for some grey nomads to undertake such trips will change with age and the number of trips taken. Oryx and Leonard (2007) stated that many grey nomads were motivated to live an Ulyssean type lifestyle, one which involves exploration, the desire to seek adventure and to expand their knowledge. The desire to live an Ulyssean lifestyle underpinned the reasons why many grey nomads undertook these types of trips. This study reported a similar result, especially amongst those grey nomads who were young and newly retired. Amongst older/more travelled grey nomads, this motivation was not as strong. Just getting away and connecting with like minded individuals becomes more important than exploring. This change was a result of ‘been there – done that – don’t wish to do it again’, mentality in other words, these grey nomads have seen and done most of the attractions and activities destinations have to offer on past trips and don’t wish to revisit those locations. This provides grey nomads with spare time to reflect on life and begin to develop bonds with other grey nomads with similar outlooks on life.

## **10:5. The Changes in Grey Nomad Movements**

Most research into grey nomads has examined them as a single non-differentiated population and had not addressed how their movement patterns will change throughout their life time as a grey nomad. However, results from both the qualitative and quantitative research, in addition to field observations, identified the existence of marked differences in the socio-economic/demographic status and mobility of grey nomads. These differences enabled grey nomads to be separated into at least six sub-classifications. These sub-classifications are: enthusiast, sun soaker, semi nomadic, wanderer, adventurous and budget grey nomads. Grey nomads in

particular sub-classifications had similar characteristics such as mobility or the motivation to travel, but there were noticeable differences in other characteristics, which set them apart from grey nomads in other sub-classifications. These differences included the purpose of travelling, destination choice, expenditure patterns, travel experience and knowledge, activities undertaken at a destination, social interaction and socio-demographic/economic characteristics. In addition, slight or very notable variations occurred in mobility.

Certain types of grey nomads gravitated towards a particular type of destination which suited their travel needs. As the characteristics (e.g. health, mobility, expenditure, activities) and needs of each grey nomad differed, the demands they place on infrastructure and service also differed. Furthermore, the amount of daily expenditure varied between different sub-populations which in turn dictated the level of financial and economic benefits they injected into their host communities. If planners are not aware of the type of visitors their destination attracts, inadequate planning for certain types of visitation may occur. This inaccurate planning may result in a possible economic down turn within the host community, similar to what Greiner *et. al.* (2004) identified occurring in the North Queensland town of Karumba.

This project highlighted the change that occurred in grey nomad mobility from when they are new to the nomadic lifestyle to when they are older and have undertaken numerous trips. Hence, this transition is aligned with a change in attitude towards travel brought on by a diversity of experiences and knowledge associated with undertaking numerous trips. This change results in a slowing of mobility and a greater level of selectivity towards destination choice. Not all grey nomads, however, will follow this transition and change their mobility. Grey nomads who are enthusiasts and some sun soakers may not change, as their focus for each trip is towards one destination and/or a particular activity at that destination. Thus, their focus for each trip will rarely change unless individual circumstances change (e.g. ill health, death of a partner, or closure of a preferred caravan park). Understanding the changes in grey nomad mobility will assist in identifying possible future trends and impacts as the current generation of grey nomads begin to age and undertake additional trips. Furthermore, the first wave of the ‘baby boomer’ generation (i.e.

those born in the late 1940s and early 1950s) are just starting to retire, which may see a predicted increase in grey nomad numbers. This increase may have far reaching implications on destinations visited by grey nomads if retiring ‘baby boomers follow the same trends. Thus, planners need to be aware that as grey nomads age and undertake more trips their movement and attitude towards travel may alter. Issues relating to this change will need to be addressed in future planning as the mobility of older grey nomads slow and they begin to stay longer at selected destinations.

## **10:6. Further Studies into Grey Nomads**

Many other issues about grey nomads still need to be investigated. Little research has been done on the passing on of anecdotal information amongst grey nomads via ‘word of mouth’ communication. A substantial amount of information is passed between grey nomads via ‘word of mouth’. Some information that is being relayed through ‘word of mouth’ regarding destinations or attractions is correct and up-to-date, whilst other details are misleading or out-dated. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of this form of communication may provide planners and service providers with a possible medium to attract additional visitation and correct any misleading information. Furthermore, examination of the speed in which information is being relayed via ‘word of mouth’ may also help to further understand grey nomad mobility and social interaction.

Further examination of the level of social interaction between grey nomads is required. An extensive amount of scholarly literature has focused on the development of a place attachment to a particular location amongst both permanent and temporary movers. A strong place attachment is a major factor in repeat visitations and extended length of stay. Constant interaction, usually over prolonged periods in one spatial setting (i.e. slow mobility), allows for strong social bonds to develop between interacting individuals. This result explains the development of social friendships between grey nomads who visit the same single primary destination. Very little research has been undertaken into the development of social bonds between highly mobile individuals. However, this study did identify that strong long-lasting friendships do develop between grey nomads with high mobility. Research into how

frequent short meetings, over a few years, can develop into lasting friendships may help to identify if friendships influence any longitudinal changes in grey nomad mobility patterns.

Another area for examination is how the influx of the ‘baby boomers’ will impact on the grey nomad phenomenon. Currently, the first wave of ‘baby boomers’ is entering the grey nomad ranks. The large population bulge of the ‘baby boomer’ generation may see grey nomad numbers increase considerably in the near future. In addition, their movement patterns should place the majority of them in the wanderer sub-population. However, further closures of caravan parks and increased cabin style accommodation within caravan parks will impact upon the availability of sites at favoured destinations. Additionally, as the current generation of grey nomads age and their mobility slows, their length of stay at selected destinations will increase, further reducing the rate of site turn-over at highly visited destinations. These factors may force more grey nomads to seek camping type accommodation over and above the already expected increase in camping due to rising travel costs. Knowledge of these factors may help the caravanning industry implement measures to alleviate any downturn which may occur within the market.

## **10:7. Concluding Point**

The foundation of Australia’s current prosperity can be partially contributed to the hard work and ingenuity of Australia’s present day retirees. After years of employment, paying mortgages and raising children, Australian retirees now have the means and time to reap the benefits of their labour. In addition, many grey nomads consider that exploring the far expanses of Australia as their ‘given right’ and their reward for years of hard labour. The stories and the photos they bring home of their adventures have encourage an interest in travel amongst friends and the younger generation, including those who are approaching retirement (i.e. the ‘baby boomer’ generation). The ‘baby boomer’ generation are not adverse to extended travel and not afraid to ‘rough it’. Baby boomers were the pioneers of the back packer movement,

which was characterised by an eagerness to undertake ‘do-it-yourself’ trips to distant corners of the world, whilst learning and experiencing different cultures while travelling on a shoe-string budget.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the above sentiment remains strong amongst those Australians who are approaching retirement. Unlike the older ‘baby boomers’ who started the back packer movement, today’s ‘baby boomers’ have higher levels of disposable income and an increased amount of leisure time. Many ‘baby boomers’ are interested in exploring the many attractions found across Australia. With such a substantial segment of Australia’s population approaching retirement and eager to travel, the short-term (i.e. within the next 10 years) future of the grey nomad phenomenon may appear promising as they begin to retire and undertake travel. However, in the long-term, the future (i.e. more than 10 years into the future) of the grey nomad phenomenon is difficult to predict. Australia’s low fertility rates and the pressures of an ageing population upon the national economy may force some older Australians to postpone retirement. Senior Australians in the future may not be as financially secure as today’s retirees. The rising cost of real estate and a possible increase in the cost of living could see a reduction in the amount of disposable income upon retirement, which may result in a decline in grey nomad numbers in the distant future.

To conclude, knowledge of grey nomad movements and choice of destinations can help planners to develop strategies for the better provision of facilities and services in areas of high visitation. If adequate services are not established in high visitation areas the number of grey nomads coming to these destinations may decline, impacting on these regional economies. Any decline in regional economies could contribute to higher unemployment rates within these regions. High rates of regional unemployment will have far reaching impacts on the rate of rural-to-urban migration, as people from country areas seek employment in larger urban centres. This movement could alter the demography and financial sustainability of regional Australia. Thus, the grey nomad movement is an important conduit for the distribution of wealth to regional and remote locations across Australia and for this reason should be embraced and promoted.



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## Appendix

### Appendix A: Ethics Approval Form



### REPORT FOR RESEARCH OR TEACHING INVOLVING HUMANS

*Human Research Ethics Committee*

HUMAN ETHICS  
APPROVAL NUMBER

**H1903**

1	TITLE OF PROJECT		An Analysis of the Winter Movement Patterns of Grey Nomads to Northern Australia						
2	CATEGORY		1						
3	PERIOD DURING WHICH ACTIVITIES REQUIRING ETHICS APPROVAL OCCURRED 2 years								
	COMMENCEMENT DATE		18/09/04		FINISH DATE	31/10/06			
4	STATUS OF PROJECT (Please tick )	Completed		In Progress		Abandoned		Not Commenced	
5	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR'S DETAILS								
	Shane Cridland					JCU	SEES		
	Last Name, First name and Title				ESN <sup>1</sup>	Orgu	Discipline/School or Institution (Country)		
	Email shane.cridland@jcu.edu.au				Phone 4041 1218			Fax 4042 1214	
5a	DETAILS of CO-INVESTIGATOR 1 (if applicable)								
	Last Name, First name and Title				ESN <sup>1</sup>	Orgu	Discipline/School or Institution (Country)		
	Zane Cridland				na	na	na		
	Email				Phone 02 6566 7799			Fax	
5b	DETAILS of CO-INVESTIGATOR 2 (if applicable)								
	Last Name, First name and Title				ESN <sup>1</sup>	Orgu	Discipline/School or Institution (Country)		
	Amy Smith				na	na	na		
	Email na				Phone na			Fax na	

<sup>1</sup> Indicate if the Researcher is currently an Employee or a Student of JCU, or a researcher who is Not affiliated with JCU. If the project involves international cooperation, please specify the country.

## Appendix

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<b>5c</b>	<b>DETAILS of CO-INVESTIGATOR 3 (if applicable)</b>			
	Last Name, First name and Title	ESN <sup>1</sup>	Orgu	Discipline/School or Institution (Country)
	<b>Lee Hobbs</b>	na	na	na
	Email na	Phone na		Fax na

<b>5d</b>	<b>DETAILS of CO-INVESTIGATOR 4 (if applicable)</b>			
	Last Name, First name and Title	ESN <sup>1</sup>	Orgu	Discipline/School or Institution (Country)
	<b>Jordahna Haig</b>	na	na	na
	Email na	Phone na		Fax na

If there are more than two co-investigators involved in this project, please copy this page and attach the details of these co-investigators at the end of this application (Part 1). **Please note: All investigators/researchers must be named on the application to be covered by ethics approval.**

**PLEASE NOTE: IF THERE HAS BEEN ANY CHANGE IN INVESTIGATORS FROM THE ORIGINAL ETHICS APPLICATION APPROVED PLEASE INCLUDE THE DETAILS OF CHANGES AS ABOVE.**

**PLEASE NOTE: THAT ANY RESEARCH STUDENT (HONOURS, POSTGRADUATE ETC) MUST BE INCLUDED ON THE ETHICS APPLICATION TO BE COVERED BY ANY ETHICS APPROVAL GRANTED.**

**Appendix B: 2006 Caravan Park Survey**

There is an additional questionnaire attached by the Department of Emergency Services to help establish better health services for wandering retirees in regional Australia

Survey No: NT/WA

Questionnaire on the movements of senior seasonal travellers.

Location of interview (township) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Part 1: The purpose of this section is to learn about your movement patterns across Australia**

- 1) How many times have you travelled north of the Tropic of Capricorn on an extended trip (for a period greater than 1 month) during the winter since retiring? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Are you travelling in a (please tick) Motor Home \_\_\_\_\_ Caravan \_\_\_\_\_ Camper/tent \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) What type of vehicle are you driving? Make \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) If travelling in a mobile home or a caravan how large is it? \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) How many years have you owned a mobile home, caravan or camper (including pre-retirement)? \_\_\_\_\_ Years
- 6) Do you maintain a permanent residence elsewhere? Yes [ ] No [ ] If so where?  
Suburb \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) How long have you lived at that address (if applicable)? \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Are you considering a permanent move in the next 12 months to a northern destination?  
Yes [ ] No [ ]
- 9) Are you on a round Australia journey? Yes [ ] No [ ]
- 10) How many times have you made a round Australia journey since retiring? \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) On which date did you approximately start this trip?  
Circle: Early – Mid - Late Please State Month/Year \_\_\_\_\_
- 12) On which date do you intend to return to your permanent residence?  
Circle: Early – Mid - Late Please State Month/Year \_\_\_\_\_
- 13) On which date did you arrive at this destination? \_\_\_\_\_
- 14) How long do you intend to stay at this destination? \_\_\_\_\_
- 15) On the last page are two maps of Australia. On the first map please indicate which route you have taken to arrive at this destination. On the second map please indicate which routes you intend to take on the remainder of your journey.

## Appendix

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16) On an **average day** during this trip how many kilometres do you like to travel  
 (approximate)? Whilst en route between destinations \_\_\_\_\_ km  
 When at a destination \_\_\_\_\_ km

17) How many times have you visited this destination since retiring during the winter months?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ If this is your first visit to this destination go to Question 20

18) How many times since retiring have you stayed at this caravan park/campsite on your travels? \_\_\_\_\_

19) In repeat visits to this destination how long was your approximate stay?

	< 1 Week	1-2 Weeks	3-4 Weeks	1<2 Months	2-3 Months	> 3 Months
1 <sup>st</sup> time						
2 <sup>nd</sup> time						
3 <sup>rd</sup> time						
4 <sup>th</sup> time						
5 <sup>th</sup> time						
6 <sup>th</sup> time						

20) Are you travelling with a group of people? Yes [ ] No [ ] If so how many? \_\_\_\_\_

21) Have you made arrangement to meet up with any fellow travellers on this trip?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

22) Do you often make arrangements to meet up with fellow travellers on your journeys?  
 Never [ ] Rarely [ ] Sometimes [ ] Frequently [ ]

23) Do you remain in contact with friends made on past journeys throughout the year (even when not travelling)? No [ ] Rarely [ ] Occasionally [ ] Frequently [ ]

24) What destinations have you visited or intend to visit on this trip? (Please state the ones you think are important to you and your travelling plans)

Have Visited	Days Spent	Intent to Visit	Days Spent

25) What are the major reasons you take extended winter journeys to Northern Australia?

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26) What major problems or dislikes do you have or have come across at some destinations in northern Australia? \_\_\_\_\_

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27) Are you planning or intend to take winter journeys north in:

[ ] 2006 [ ] 2007 [ ] 2008 [ ] Beyond 2008 How offend do you plan ahead? \_\_\_\_\_

28) Which factors do you consider will influence a decision to stop travelling?

Fuel Cost [ ] Accommodation Cost [ ] To difficult in obtaining a desire site [ ]  
Ill Health [ ] Other \_\_\_\_\_

29) What forms of communication do you find useful to inform you on destinations to stay (please write in order of importance)? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Part 2: The following sections will help to identify service and infrastructure used**

30) Have you found it difficult finding vacant site in some caravan parks whilst on your travels? Yes [ ] No [ ] If yes where? \_\_\_\_\_

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31) Do you book sites in caravan parks prior to arrival?

Never [ ] Sometimes [ ] When necessary [ ] All the time [ ]  
If so, on average how far in advance do you book? \_\_\_\_\_ Days/Weeks/Months

32) On average how would you rate the facilities in caravan parks you have visited?

Poor [ ] Fair [ ] Good [ ] Very Good [ ] Excellent [ ]

33) What improvements would you recommend within caravan parks? \_\_\_\_\_

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34) What favourite activities do you undertake outside the caravan park (e.g. fishing, bowls, bushwalking)? \_\_\_\_\_

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35) On a typical day within a caravan park, what activities do you undertake to pass the time?

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## Appendix

36) Please state the frequency you stay at a particular type of location?

36a) (Approx) Percentage of overall use on average trip

### **Free Camping Areas:**

### Percentage of use %

## **Low Cost Camping:** <\$10/night

### Percentage of use

## **Caravan Parks:**

Percentage of use \_\_\_\_\_ %

If you stay solely in caravan parks please go to Question 37 please

36b) If using free or low cost sites on this trip please state the location where they can be found (include locations stay and possible locations where you intent to stay).

### Location/Name/Closes town

## Days Spent

37) How often do you grocery shop? When required [ ] or mostly in large centres [ ]

### Other comments

38) Do you consider that there are enough rest areas en route? Yes [ ] No [ ] Unsure [ ]

39) How do you rate the quality of rest areas en route? Poor [ ] Fair [ ] Good [ ] Very Good [ ]

40) What improvements would you welcome at rest areas?

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41) How do you rate the quality of the roads you travel on?

Poor [ ] Fair [ ] Good [ ] Very Good [ ]

42) Which roads need attention?

**Part 3: This section will help identify the general profile of senior travellers and their expenditure in regional areas and thus the benefits they provide to local economies. Some questions may seem highly personal; however, your identity will remain anonymous at all times (even to me). Please, skip any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering.**

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43) Please state each person staying with you

	Age	Sex (M- F)	Relationship to you (e.g. Married, De facto, Brother, Sister, Single)	Retired (Yes or No)
<b>Person 1 (Self)</b>			(Self)	
<b>Person 2</b>				

44) Please identify person's occupation (Former, if now retired)

**Person 1** \_\_\_\_\_ If retired, how long? \_\_\_\_\_  
**Person 2** \_\_\_\_\_

45) Please state the highest level of education you and your partner (if applicable) have obtained

<b>Person 1</b> Did not Finish school [ ]	High School Certificate [ ]
Tafe/College [ ]	University [ ]
<b>Person 2</b> Did not Finish school [ ]	High School Certificate [ ]
Tafe/College [ ]	University [ ]

46) Did you spend yesterday in transit between destinations or at a destination?

In Transit [ ] At a destination [ ]

47) During your travels yesterday, approximately how much money did you spend (please include costs like food, fuel, sightseeing costs and accommodation, etc)?

\$\_\_\_\_\_

48) Are you a self funded retiree (if part pension please indicate)?

Yes [ ] No [ ] Part Pension [ ]

49) Any comment you wish to address that you consider would make future winter journeys to Northern Australia more enjoyable.\_\_\_\_\_

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Thank you for undertaking in this survey. By participating in this study I shall be able to inform planners and regulators what infrastructure and services need improving at destinations you frequent. This information will insure that in the future your journeys north for the winter will become more enjoyable and easier, especially as the numbers of retirees visiting Northern Australia increase

Maps for Question 15  
Route taken to this destination



Intended return route



### Appendix C: 2006 Camping Survey

There is an additional questionnaire attached by the Department of Emergency Services to help establish better health services for wandering retirees in regional Australia

Survey No. WANT/FC

Questionnaire on the movements of senior seasonal travellers. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Location of interview (Closest Town) \_\_\_\_\_ HWY

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Part 1: The purpose of this section is to learn about your movement patterns across Australia

- 1) How many times have you travelled north on an extended trip (for a period greater than 1 month) during the winter since retiring? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Are you travelling in a (please tick) Motor home \_\_\_\_\_ Caravan \_\_\_\_\_ Camper/tent \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) What type of vehicle are you driving? Make \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) If travelling in a mobile home or a caravan how large is it? \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) How many years have you owned a mobile home, caravan or camper (including pre-retirement)? [ ] Years
- 6) Do you maintain a permanent residence elsewhere? Yes [ ] No [ ] If so where?  
Suburb \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) How long have you lived at that address? \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Are you on a round Australia journey? Yes [ ] No [ ]
- 9) How many times have you made a round Australia journey since retiring? \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) On which date did you approximately start this trip? \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) On which date do you intend to return to your permanent residence? \_\_\_\_\_
- 12) On which date did you arrive at this destination? \_\_\_\_\_
- 13) How long do you intend to stay at this destination? \_\_\_\_\_
- 14) On the last page are two maps of Australia. On the first map please indicate which route you have taken to arrive at this destination. On the second map please indicate which routes you intend to take on the remainder of your journey.
- 15) On an **average day** during this trip how many kilometres you would travel (approximate)?  
Whilst en route \_\_\_\_\_ km When at a destination \_\_\_\_\_ km

## Appendix

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16) What destinations have you visited or intend to visit on this trip? (Please state the ones you think are important to you and your travelling plans)

Have Visited	Days Spent	Intent to Visit	Days Spent

17) Are you travelling with a group of people? Yes [ ] No [ ] If so how many? \_\_\_\_\_

18) Do you often make arrangements to meet up with other fellow travellers on your journeys?  
Never [ ] Rarely [ ] Sometimes [ ] Frequently [ ]

19) Do you remain in contact with friends made on past journeys throughout the year (even when not travelling)?

No [ ] Rarely [ ] Occasionally [ ] Frequently [ ] If so how many? \_\_\_\_\_

20) Please state the frequency in which you stay at a particular type of location?

(Approx) Percentage of overall use on average trip

Free Camping Areas:	Percentage of use	%
Low Cost Camping: <\$10/night	Percentage of use	%
Caravan Parks:	Percentage of use	%

20a) If using free or low cost sites on this trip please state the location where they can be found (include locations stay and possible locations where you intent to stay).

Location/Name/Closes town Days Spent


21) Do you frequent the same sites on consecutive travels? Yes [ ] No [ ]

22) What is the main reason for using free and low cost camping areas?

Cost [ ] Convenience between destinations [ ] Both [ ] Other \_\_\_\_\_


## Appendix

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23) What are the major reasons you take extended winter journeys to Northern Australia?

Please tick appropriate box	Not Important	Fairly Important	Important	Very Important
Weather				
Visited friends and family				
Socialise with other elderly				
Adventure				
A change of lifestyle from home				
To travel whilst you are still capable				
Other (Please State)				

24) What major problems or dislikes do you have or come across at some destinations in northern Australia? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

25) Are you planning or intend to take winter journeys north in:

[ ] 2006 [ ] 2007 [ ] 2008 [ ] Beyond 2008 How offend do you plan ahead? \_\_\_\_\_

26) Which factors do you consider will influence a decision to stop travelling?

Increasing Fuel Cost [ ] Increasing Accommodation Cost [ ] Ill Health [ ]  
To difficult in obtaining a desire site [ ] Other \_\_\_\_\_

27) What forms of communication (e.g. travel guides, word and mouth) do you find useful to informing you of the places to visit?

Townships	Camping destinations
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Part 2: This section will help identify the general profile of senior travellers and their expenditure in regional areas and thus the benefits they provide to local economies. Some questions may seem highly personal; however, your identity will remain anonymous at all times (even to me). Please, skip any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering.

28) Please state each person staying with you

	Age	Sex (M- F)	Relationship to you e.g. Married, De facto, Brother, Sister)	Retired (Yes or No)
<b>Person 1 (Self)</b>			Self	
<b>Person 2</b>				

29) Please identify person's occupation (Former, if now retired)

**Person 1** \_\_\_\_\_ If retired, how long? \_\_\_\_\_

**Person 2** \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix

30) Please state the highest level of education you and your partner (if applicable) have obtained

Person 1 Did not Finish school [ ] High School Certificate [ ]

Tafe/College [ ] University [ ]

Person 2 Did not Finish school [ ] High School Certificate [ ]

Tafe/College [ ] University [ ]

31) Did you spend yesterday in transit between destinations or at a destination?

In Transit [ ] At a destination [ ]

32) During your travels yesterday, approximately how much money did you spend (please include costs like food, fuel, sightseeing costs and accommodation, etc)? \$

33) Are you a self funded retiree? (If on Part-pension please state)

Part-pension (please state) Yes [ ] No [ ] Part-Pension [ ]

34) Any comment you wish to address that you consider would make future winter journeys to Northern Australia more enjoyable.

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Thank you for undertaking in this survey. By participating in this study I shall be able to inform planners and regulators which infrastructure and services need improving at destinations you frequent. This information will insure that in the future your journeys north for the winter will become more enjoyable and easier, especially as the numbers of retirees visiting Northern Australia increase.

Maps for Question 14  
Route taken to this destination



Intended return route



## Appendix D: Emergency Services/Pet Questionnaire

Please tick or cross all boxes that are applicable

1. Are you travelling at the moment as a:

Single [ ] Couple [ ] Group of 2 vehicle [ ] > 2 groups [ ]

2. Have you sought any medical advice from your family doctor prior to departing on this or past trips in regards to managing and medical conditions during your travel?

**Current:** Yes [ ] No [ ]      **Past:** Every Trip [ ] Only recent trips [ ] No [ ]  
If yes, did you find the information useful?      Yes [ ] No [ ] Unsure [ ] NA [ ]  
Do you think that your family doctor is well informed in relation to travel related health risks?  
Yes [ ] No [ ] Unsure [ ]

Does your doctor provide you with a letter stating your current medical status? Yes [ ] No [ ] NA [ ]  
What advice has your general practitioner given you (if any)? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Have you or your partner (if applicable) visited or needed to utilise any medical services during this or past trips?

**Current:** Yes [ ] No [ ]      **Past:** Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yes, please state medical issue and where?

Medical issue

Where

Current: \_\_\_\_\_

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Past: \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Have you ever encounter any problems seeking medical assistance? What was the problem and how was it overcome? Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yeas what \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Do you organise you trip to be at certain destinations to utilise and medical facilities (e.g. general practitioner, getting prescriptions)? Yes [ ] No [ ]

6. If you suffer from any chronic health issues, do you or your doctor organise appointments to visit specialists at destinations you visit prior to leaving? Yes [ ] No [ ] NA [ ]

7. Does anyone in your party have a current senior's first aid certificate? Yes [ ] No [ ] Unsure [ ]  
Has anyone in your party ever had first aid experience? Yes [ ] No [ ] Unsure [ ]  
Do you carry a first aid kit? Vehicle [ ] Caravan [ ] Both [ ] No [ ]

8. Is seeking medical assistance during your travel a concern? Yes [ ] No [ ] Unsure [ ]

9. Apart from 000, were you aware of the 112 emergency number for mobiles phones? Yes [ ] No [ ]

10. When you are visiting a destination, are you aware of local health risks? Yes [ ] No [ ] Unsure [ ]  
What sources make you aware? \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix

11. In the event of a medical emergency outside of a town or city, what equipment do you have to help assist emergency services personnel in identifying your location? GPS [ ] Maps [ ] Travel Guides [ ] Flares [ ] UHF/HF radio [ ] Mobile [ ] Other: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Have you discussed with your travel partners or family members what should be done in the case of a medical situation during travel? Yes [ ] No [ ]

13. In the event of a medical emergency happening to you or your partner what support systems or plans have you in place? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. What skills and knowledge do you have that can aid in a medical emergency? \_\_\_\_\_

Ailments	You	Partner	Ailments	You	Partner
Heart Disease			Gastrointestinal Disorder		
High Cholesterol			Emphysema		
High Blood Pressure			Other Respiratory Disorders		
Renal Disorder			Sleep Apnea		
Arthritis			Other Sleeping Disorders		
Osteoporosis			Cancer		
Migraines			Other:		
Diabetes			Other:		

15. Do you travel with pets? Yes [ ] Go to Q16 No [ ] Go to Q19

16. Are you currently travelling with your pet? Yes [ ] No [ ]  
If yes, please indicate the number of each type of pet you are travelling with in the space provided.  
Dog under 12kg [ ] Dog over 12kg [ ] Cat [ ] Other [ ] Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

17. Have you left any pets behind to make this trip? Yes [ ] No [ ]  
If yes, please indicate the number of each type of pet you are travelling with in the space provided.  
Dog under 12kg [ ] Dog over 12kg [ ] Cat [ ] Other [ ] Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Should camping areas including national parks allow controlled pets? Please tick the response that best matches your opinion. **Strongly Disagree** [ ] **Disagree** [ ] **Agree** [ ] **Strongly Agree** [ ]

19. Should all caravan parks allow controlled pets? Please tick the response that best matches your opinion.  
**Strongly Disagree** [ ]    **Disagree** [ ]    **Agree** [ ]    **Strongly Agree** [ ]

Any Additional Comments:

Thank you for your assistance and may you have a safe and enjoyable journey.

**Appendix E: The Cross-tabulation table showing ASR results for types of destinations visited and place of usual Residence.**

**Type of Destination \* State Crosstabulation**

Type of Destination		State									Total
		ACT	NPA	NS W	NZ	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	
Large Coastal Centre	Count	2	17	37	3	25	10	5	32	17	148
	Std. Residual	.0	.9	1.4	.9	.5	-.8	-.3	-.4	-1.6	
Small Coastal Town	Count	1	7	18	2	16	13	2	34	26	119
	Std. Residual	-.5	-1.2	-1.2	.4	-.5	.8	-1.2	1.2	1.3	
Large Inland Centre	Count	1	15	39	2	29	22	9	51	25	193
	Std. Residual	-1.0	-.7	.1	-.3	-.1	1.3	.5	1.0	-1.4	
Small Inland Town	Count	1	8	26	1	19	19	8	32	6	120
	Std. Residual	-.5	-1.0	.4	-.4	.2	2.6	1.5	.8	-3.2	
Remote	Count	1	2	8	0	4	0	2	8	7	32
	Std. Residual	.9	-.6	.6	-.6	-.4	-1.7	.7	.2	.7	
Coastal Camping	Count	0	10	12	0	16	2	5	13	17	75
	Std. Residual	-1.0	1.1	-.8	-1.0	1.3	-1.8	1.2	-1.0	1.2	
Inland Camping (no permanent natural water)	Count	1	4	9	1	4	1	0	5	2	27
	Std. Residual	1.1	.9	1.5	1.1	-.1	-.9	-1.0	-.5	-1.2	
Inland Camping (permanent natural water)	Count	0	19	16	0	14	6	4	21	17	97
	Std. Residual	-1.1	3.3	-.8	-1.1	-.2	-.8	.1	-.3	.1	
Inland camping (with washing facilities)	Count	2	5	9	3	8	3	1	6	4	41
	Std. Residual	1.9	.6	.3	3.5	.7	-.3	-.5	-1.1	-1.1	
Tourism Cities	Count	4	3	19	0	12	8	2	21	43	112
	Std. Residual	2.0	-2.3	-.7	-1.2	-1.2	-.6	-1.1	-1.0	5.5	
Total	Count	13	90	193	12	147	84	38	223	164	964