



UNITED STATES NAVY INFORMATION OPERATIONS DETACHMENT  
ALICE SPRINGS

## PCS INFORMATION

### UNIFORMS:

**BRING YOUR UNIFORMS!** We are restricted from wearing our military uniforms while stationed in Alice Springs, except on special occasions. You will wear civilian clothes at work and will be given a civilian clothing allowance, but there are some occasions that will require you to be in uniform such as reenlistment and promotion ceremonies and other special occasions. You may also find yourself on a TAD trip back to the states where you will be required to be in uniform, so all personnel are required to bring a **full** seabag.

### SCHEDULE:

There are four crews that essentially work 4 on 4 off (12 hr watches).

### SCHOOLS:

Alice Springs offers several primary and secondary public and private education schools. Most of the private schools are operated by Christian church organizations providing education in the context of a religious direction. Private school enrollment may be difficult depending on availability so it is recommended to contact the school before you PCS. Membership in the sponsoring church is not a requirement; however, church member families may be given preference. **Tuition for private schools in most cases is fully funded.**

### HOUSING:

Housing is distributed throughout the town and intermingled with the local population. Your family size will define the type of home assigned. There are several different styles of homes ranging from two bedroom flats to five bedroom homes. All of the homes are **fully** furnished to include major appliances. Window treatments are installed and there is carpeting in the living areas and bedrooms. All master bedrooms are equipped with a queen-size bed and all other bedrooms include a single bed. You are permitted to ship your own bed with your HHG's for your master bedroom if you choose. Before you ship any other furniture, talk to your sponsor, in most cases the housing office will not take back any furniture.

To accommodate American style electrical devices, electrical transformers are provided in the homes as built-in units for the kitchen and individual units that can be used for any room. The transformers output with an American style outlet.

In-Town Housing (ITH) will provide you with a survival kit to use while you wait for your household goods to arrive. The survival kit will include items such as kitchenware and linens.



If you are single there is a single Sailor survival kit available for the length of your tour. If you require this kit, talk to your sponsor.

**POV:**

The Northern Territory is one of the "states" which allows left-hand vehicles to be imported, registered, and insured. If you own a vehicle, you should consider shipping it. There are several factors listed below you should be aware of when making a determination to ship or not. Scroll down for specific information about motorcycles. Cost of insuring left-hand drive vehicles, especially "unique to the U.S. only" models are at times expensive to insure. Make, model, and parts availability are factored in to the cost of the vehicle.

U.S. manufactured vehicles (mainly Chevrolet, GM, Ford, Dodge, Plymouth, Buick, Pontiac, etc.) may have extremely limited parts availability in Australia. Shipping a replacement part would probably be the only option and the APO has weight and size restrictions that must be followed. Factory warranties may not cover your vehicle outside of the U.S.

U.S. full size pickup trucks and SUV's commonly have larger tires than trucks used in Australia. Finding a replacement tire can be difficult and if found, is usually very expensive. Also, fuel costs are much higher than in the U.S. and these vehicles will normally be expensive to drive on a daily basis.

Vehicles that generally do not have problems with parts availability or major problems with Northern Territory vehicle inspections are made by Toyota, Mazda, Jeep, Nissan, Daewoo, Kia, Mitsubishi, Hyundai, Honda, and others. Check with your sponsor and/or the dealers listed below for parts and mechanical service availability for your vehicle.

Vehicles bought locally can be expensive and unable to be imported into the U.S. At the end of your tour, it may be difficult to sell your vehicle. If you ship your vehicle and it becomes unfit for shipping out of the country (ex. catastrophic accident), you will be subject to an import duty assessed to all vehicles not assembled in Australia, which is approximately \$16,000 for new cars.

If you plan to drive in Alice Springs, you have to obtain an Australian NT driver's license within 90 days of arrival. Minimum driving age is 16 and a half. To obtain a driver's license, you will need a valid U.S. license. The cost of the license is A\$24.00.

Australian insurance companies base their rates on your record of claims for the last 5 years. Bring a letter from your U.S. insurer describing your record of claims or claim-free driving. Without such a statement, you will be placed in a high-risk category and comprehensive coverage can be expensive. Insurance rates increase periodically. Registration costs for private vehicles average about \$500 which includes compulsory third-party insurance. (TPI covers only injury to other party; does not cover damages to other car.) Annual registration is required for every vehicle, which may or may not include an annual inspection. A 30 day, restricted registration is available for left-hand vehicles to allow time for modification of lights, mirrors, etc.

To register your car, you need:

1. A current NT license or proof of residency.
2. Proof of ownership or receipt of person selling vehicle
3. New vehicles and vehicles transferring to the NT must have a compliance check done at the MVR. Bring inspection report.
4. If importing your vehicle, provide importation papers and a copy of the SOFA agreement. (Site provides a copy of the SOFA agreement.)

## **MEDICAL SERVICES:**

Medical service is available to all American employees and their eligible dependents. Comprehensive and on-going primary medical care services are at both the In-Town medical clinic and at the Facility medical clinic. The extent of the services provided is dependent on the training and experience of the Facility Medical Officer assigned to the Facility at the time. This may include care in the areas of general internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology and all other areas of family practice. Emergency medical care, including after-hours care, is provided to an extent which is appropriate considering available physical and human resources. The clinics offer walk-in service or you may setup an appointment.

If the In-Town or Facility clinic refers you to a health provider in town, you MUST contact TRICARE prior to making/going to any appointments outside the clinic. Once TRICARE gets authorization, they will contact you with the okay to setup the appointment and will likely provide contact information for specific approved health providers in town. Once you make the appointment, let TRICARE know when and where so they can send a guarantee of payment to the provider. Failure to do so may result in you having to pay the bill.

Also, if you get blood drawn or any other pathological testing from the In-Town or Facility clinics that need to go to a lab, ensure the clinic puts the TRICARE billing address (TRICARE, International SOS, PO Box 4561, Sydney, NSW, 2001) on the referral from to the lab. This way, the late notices will go directly to TRICARE instead of you.

## **DENTAL SERVICES:**

Dental services are covered by United Concordia. The sponsor should ensure their dependents' information is current in DEERS by visiting the AFPC website as well as checking with UCCI.com to verify enrollment, benefits, and coverage. If you have Other Health Insurance (OHI), please remember to file with them first, then TRICARE.

If you travel out of your designated TRICARE region (Australia) for more than 30 days, you need to transfer your enrollment to the region in which you are traveling. You are only covered for urgent, emergent, and medically necessary care while out of area. Do not wait to get back to the U.S., for example, to set up a routine appointment. It will not be covered. For prescriptions, you pay out of pocket and file a claim when you get back. Active duty members must use a TRICARE listed dentist and notify TRICARE International SOS after making any dental appointments. This is to ensure the plan covers the desired dental procedure. The dental facility will file the charges and claims with TRICARE and are reimbursed those charges. As of Mar 2008, the only TRICARE listed dental office in Alice Springs is Alice Springs Dental Surgery, located at 2 Larapinta Drive .

Services for family members, however, must be settled by the member/member's family at the time of the dental appointment, and then file a reimbursement claim directly with United Concordia. Since the dental facility will not be coordinating with United Concordia for payment, dependents are authorized to utilize the dental facilities of their choosing.

TRICARE does not need to be contacted for routine visits prior to the appointment. Claim forms can either be obtained through the United Concordia website [www.ucci.com](http://www.ucci.com) or through Navy Admin here on site. The sponsor can bring the claim form and paid bill in to Navy Admin for faxing. Upon receipt, UCCI adjudicates the claim and sends payment to either the member's APO box or Navy/site APO. You can setup an account at [www.TRICARE4u.com](http://www.TRICARE4u.com) to check the status or your claims.

If your family members are in need of orthodontic care, contact Navy Admin BEFORE you set up any appointments. Navy Admin will provide a briefing, a list of approved dentists, and appropriate forms.

Information on the TRICARE Dental Plan can be found on the United Concordia website at [www.ucci.com](http://www.ucci.com) and the TRICARE Pacific website at [www.TRICARE.osd.mil/pacific/default.cfm](http://www.TRICARE.osd.mil/pacific/default.cfm).

#### **INTERNET SERVICES:**

There are many accessible ISPs using local dialup and broadband options from Alice Springs. The longest established one is [OZEMAIL](#), a national ISP and payment is through credit card, and [BigPond](#) (a TELSTRA company), again with payment through credit card. The third is [AUSTARNET](#) with online registration available. Another is [Octa4](#) which operates through an agency at Town & Country on Hartley Street. Recent additions to the list include [TPG](#) which is based in the Territory.

An excellent source for availability and plan options for broadband service is located at <http://bc.whirlpool.net.au/>.

#### **TELEVISION:**

Four Free Air TV stations are available to every home. The free to air stations cover the most popular U.S. TV shows. Be aware the TV broadcast in Australia is PAL not the U.S. standard NTSC.

Alice Springs has wireless Cable TV provided by AUSTAR ([www.austar.com.au](http://www.austar.com.au)). The usual channels can be found (including Discovery, News, Sports, Movies, Nickelodeon etc) and for an additional fee a Premium Channel called World Movies, which is a foreign "art-house" movie channel, is also available. In Australia call 132-432 for the cost of a local call for information, 7 days/week, 7am-10pm. There is no physical office any longer for this service provider. Sign up through a friend's referral to get your friend some freebies. Austar also acts as a local ISP ([www.austarnet.com.au](http://www.austarnet.com.au)) for internet and may combine your bill if using their services.

#### **ADULT EDUCATION:**

The University of Maryland University College (UMUC) in Asia offers academic programs to United States military communities throughout Asia and the Pacific. While serving overseas, students can take a single course or many courses leading to a certificate, as associate of arts degree, a bachelor of arts degree, or a bachelor of science degree. Since UMUC is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, students can take courses with the intention of transferring their credits to other colleges or universities in the United States.

Due to the remoteness of Alice Springs, few face-to-face courses are available. Distance Education provides many courses and a very flexible schedule with on-line classes. Applying for admission and enrolling in courses is done both on line and in coordination with the University of Maryland Field Representative.

#### **DAY CARE:**

Day care facilities in Alice Springs are very limited. There are several day care facilities in town but they are all normally full with waiting lists ranging from 1 to 3 months. Also, all of the day care facilities only provide services for normal working hours during the week. Services after these hours, during the weekend, and on Aussie holidays are normally not available.

Due to the demand for day care services, many people offer babysitting out of their home. Commonly called "home day care", this is the only real option for many parents. Australian locals, other American parents, and their teenagers mainly comprise the list of people offering this service. An office in town manages the program and can set you up with a home care provider. The charge as of March 2008 is \$4.00-6.00 per hour for days and \$8.00-10.00 for nights/weekend/holidays. Contact your sponsor for the most up to day information.

**OTHER:**

Electricity in Australia is 240 volt, 50hz. Appliances wired for 220/240 volt "two phase" will not operate on Australia "single phase" systems. Most American small appliances (110 volt) will provide satisfactory service when used with a transformer but may run slower since Australian current is 50hz.

If you have doubts whether an appliance is suitable to bring to Australia, look at the information plate. If it states 110/220 volt and 50/60hz, then it will work without alteration other than a plug adapter. If it states 110 volt, 50/60hz, then it will give acceptable performance with a transformer. Lamps normally only require a replacement of the bulb to one that specifies 220v, 50hz and of course a plug adapter. Plug adapters can be purchases in most electronics stores or department stores.

# SHOPPING

## **Alice Springs Newsagency**

As you stroll down the Todd Mall, you can't help but stop by the Alice Springs Newsagency to browse around or maybe pick up a newspaper to read while you enjoy yourself at one of the many outdoor eateries nearby. They offer magazines, books, stationary, souvenirs and more. They have a variety of local oriented items for tourists or travelers on aboriginal topics, maps and guides of the local area, and postcards. Also the place to pick up international phone card the current price is around \$.05 per minute to CONUS.



## **Priceline Pharmacy**

Priceline offers a wide range of health products for cough and cold, pain relief, baby care, skin care, and much more. Their friendly and knowledgeable staff can offer advice on what you are looking for. They are also the only Pharmacy in town that accepts TRICARE.

## **Barbeques Galore**

Barbeques Galore makes backyard entertaining an exciting pastime for the entire family. The company is one of the world's leading specialty retailers of barbeques. They provide the best quality, most up-to-date barbeques in the industry - from the award winning Turbo, to the Capt 'N' Cook, Cordon Blue, Beefmaster, Downunder, Weber, and Rinnai branded barbeques. They also sell a large range of outdoor furniture and the ultimate in fun, stylish and funky backyard accessories.



## **Dymocks Booksellers**



Dymocks Booksellers is a major resource for books in Australia. They have one of the widest range of books available in stock. For books not in stock, they have the capability to order an even wider range of books for fast shipment at no extra cost. Their range of books include subjects specific to the Northern Territory from aboriginal culture and history to travel and touring.

## **Kmart**

Similar but slightly different than Kmart in the U.S., Australia's Kmart still offers an incredibly wide range of products from hair and makeup products, men's and women's clothing, clothing for children of all ages, baby accessories, outdoor equipment, electronics, movies, music, tools, home products, pet products, school products, garden products, and more. A Target Store is being built in town and should be operational in 2008.



## Mensland



Mensland offers fine quality men's clothing to include polo shirts, dress shirts, slacks, belts, and more. They are the main provider for higher quality men's clothing in Alice Springs. They are located on the Todd Mall.

## Mitre 10

Mitre 10 is one of Australia's leading hardware and home improvement company's. They offer quick and easy shopping for do-it-yourself projects, plant and garden supplies, tools, and much more. They can also provide advice on products, projects, and services.



## Murray Neck



Murray Neck offers a wide range of furniture, home products, barbecues, and more in their superstore size showroom floor. They have the largest selection of the best quality furniture Alice Springs has to offer. Locally owned and operated, Murray Neck will assist you with outstanding customer service for all of your home needs.

## Penny Farthing Bike Shop

The Penny Farthing Bike Shop has a wealth of experience focused on providing Alice Springs with products designed to fit all cyclists from the professional track, road and dirt riders to family relaxation and the casual cruisers. The range of bikes, accessories, and clothing ranges consists of an exciting diversification based on top brand names such as Apollo, Avanti, Raleigh, Free Agent BMX, Gary Fisher, Look, Raceline, Redline, Specialized, Sintesi and Trek to the little league recreation bikes.



## Pets 'R' Us



Pets 'R' Us offers a wide range of accessories for dogs, cats, fish, birds, and many other pets. Their courteous staff is known for their outstanding customer service and can help you find what you're looking for. If they don't have what you need, they will be happy to place a special order for you if it's possible.

## Rock City Music

Rock City Music is a complete music store handling all aspects of entertainment, supplying all forms of music equipment, providing sound systems and discotheque hire and managing a number of entertainers. It deals with the industry icon manufacturers including Fender guitars and amplification, Yamaha products, Pearl drums, and Gibson/Epiphone guitars, as well as many other brands.



## Wombat

Popular among locals and tourists alike, Wombat clothing store offers fine quality women's clothing, lingerie, swimwear, evening, casual, and work wear. They offer clothing for a wide age range and have competitive prices. Located in the center of the Todd Mall, Wombat can't be missed.

## Tandy

Tandy is one of Australia's leading electronics retailers. They offer a wide range of products from leading brands in home and business electronics, computers, home entertainment, communications and more. Brand names include Panasonic, Sharp, Canon, and Sony. They also carry a large range of cables, accessories, and a comprehensive range of batteries.



## Todd Mall Markets



You can find yourself a bargain, grab a unique souvenir or some local art and craft, or dine alfresco style soaking up the colorful entertainment that is on offer at these fortnightly markets. There is a diverse and extensive range of locally made arts and crafts, including a good selection of jewelery, beauty products, baskets, fashion accessories, hats, sculptures, antiques, secondhand books and CDs, and much more. You can also taste some of the delicious foods offered by the many different cultures that have an influence in Alice Springs. Try some tasty Thai or Swiss cuisine, or perhaps an icy cold fruit smoothie to cool you down. Each market offers entertainment, ranging from local singers and bands such as the Alice Springs Town Band, to poets and a wide array of local performers.

# EATERIES

## **Bluegrass Restaurant**



Glowing in its blue hazy soft lighting, the Bluegrass Restaurant attracts patrons with its tempting and softly lit atmosphere. Combined with the historical elements of the heritage listed building, large leafy trees in the alfresco area, the obvious central location, gourmet cuisine and a variety of over 100 wines, the Bluegrass Restaurant is popular with locals and

transient tourists alike.

## **Bojangles Saloon and Restaurant**

Bojangles provides true Territory Tucker such as Camel, Crocodile, Kangaroo, Emu and Barramundi. For serious meat lovers there are six steaks available including "The Big Bugger", a 600gm T-Bone steak and Bo's famous Beef Ribs. A full range of a la carte meals are available in the Saloon and the dining room with additional simple fare menu in the Saloon for light snacks such as Nachos and Steak Sandwiches. Many dishes have been provided for fish and chicken lovers as well as vegetarians and our kitchen will cook to request for any special dietary requirements.



## **Casa Nostra Pizza and Spaghetti House**



An old family owned Italian restaurant. Serving pizzas, pasta, meat dishes and other quality meals in a casual and friendly atmosphere. A regular favorite among locals and highly recommended. Just a short walk from the Todd Mall over the Todd River footbridge.

## **The Firkin and Hound**

Enjoy the atmosphere of a truly authentic English pub and restaurant and the Firkin and Hound. Slip back into time to the days of royal splendor while enjoying one of their 12 International beers on tap, a cocktail, a glass of excellent Australian wine or a classic single malt scotch. The Firkin and Hound is a place where relaxation, stimulation and conversation are the order of the day. Informality is welcome and a desire to "dive in for a swift pint" will be satisfied. Offers an array of appetizers, Salads and Meals.



### **Keller's Swiss and Indian Restaurant**



Indian and Swiss cuisine is an excellent mix. As only the extraverted Beat Keller can create. Beat is a Swiss trained chef with many accolades to his name. Not one for resting on his previous achievements, the big man prefers to let his clientele be his food critics. His favorite comment “you can win or loose on one dish”, says it all and ensures a taste explosion with every mouthful. A recent refurbishment has lifted the ambiance to Beat’s exacting European standards.

### **Oscar's Cafe Restaurant**

Portuguese food with a Mediterranean twist and a modern cafe feel, makes Oscar's a very popular and busy place. Friendly service and large servings are at reasonable prices. Located on the Todd Mall and close to the Cinema Complex. Especially popular for their outstanding dessert dishes and excellent cappuccino's, espresso's and latte's.



### **Pizza Hut**



If you're a fan of Pizza Hut in the states, you'll enjoy the same quality pizza in Alice Springs. Pizza Hut has most of the popular styles of pizza from the states to include the supreme, meat lovers, veggie, etc. as well as some aussie variations for a nice change of pace.

### **Todd Tavern Pub Cafe**

The Todd Tavern offers hearty meals in their newly renovated Pub Cafe Restaurant and low cost, good quality accommodations. Separate areas of the Cafe offer different environments such as a traditional pub with TV's, TAB, Keno and Poker machines, a quiet dining area with an upscale bar, outside dining alfresco style and a mini-bar area with a large flat screen TV for watching sporting events. The Todd Tavern is ideally located close to the Cinema, Todd Mall and the Alice Plaza Shopping Centre.



# ACTIVITIES

Alice Springs is very sports and outdoor oriented as a community. There are all sorts of sporting teams from [Aussie Rules Football](#), [Rugby](#), [Netball](#), Basketball and Softball to Ten Pin Bowling, Volleyball, Tennis, [Swimming](#), Badminton and Baseball. The Youth Centre on Wills Terrace features a roller-hockey venue. The various sport venues are all over town. The Masters Games is held every two years (next up is 2006) and is one of the best of its type in the country - competitors number in the thousands! Minimum age to compete depends on the sport. The Alice Springs Town Pool is a large complex with a main pool plus kids' pools. It's about \$1-\$2 entry and there is a lifeguard, kiosk, grassed areas and equipment for hire (inflatable rafts etc).

People like to go camping, hiking, fossicking for gemstones etc. The area is packed with beautiful gorges and rock formations, waterholes (when there's been enough rain) and natural bushland. A magnificent walking track - The Larapinta Walking Trail - has established its first sections for those who like to hike. The finished trail will extend approximately 220km from Alice Springs to the West. There is also an excellent fully sealed bicycle track from Alice to Simpsons Gap which meanders through the bush along the base of the MacDonnell Ranges.

## **Alice Springs Cultural Precinct**

The Alice Springs Cultural Precinct is home to some of the most interesting cultural and historical attractions in Alice Springs. It encompasses performing and visual arts, the natural history of the region, Aboriginal culture and the more recent European settlement. The Cultural Precinct includes the Araluen Centre and Galleries, Namatjira Gallery, Grand Circle Yeperenye Sculpture, Museum of Central Australia, the Strehlow Research Centre, Central Australian Aviation Museum, and Territory Craft and Memorial Cemetery. A walking tour around the Precinct provides a fascinating glimpse of the history of Central Australia, and of some of the local identities who helped to build both the town of Alice Springs and the Northern Territory.



## **Alice Springs Desert Park**



Designed to move well beyond the boundaries of traditional zoos, botanic gardens and museums, the park has adopted a holistic "habitat-based and story driven" approach. Discover the desert in its entirety; the landscapes, animals and plants, and their traditional use and management by Aboriginal people. View rare and endangered animals, including Australian marsupials such as the bilby and mala, on display in the world's most spectacular desert nocturnal house.

## **Alice Springs Golf Club**

The sporting showpiece of this unofficial capital of Central Australia is the stunning Alice Springs Golf Club which boasts one of the world's finest desert venues set in the foothills of the majestic MacDonnell Ranges. The Alice Springs course has earned rave reviews from golfers world-wide as a course of unique charm blended with some subtle severity. Accuracy is a must and even the boldest hitters must harness their power and replace it with discretion to ensure a safe landing, rather than challenge the menacing spinifex which lurks at the edges of the fairways.



## [Alice Springs Reptile Center](#)



Visit frilled neck lizards, thorny devils, huge perentie goannas, large pythons and venomous snakes at the Northern Territory's largest reptile display. A saltwater crocodile exhibit provides views below water level for a close up experience.

## **Anzac Hill**

Anzac is the abbreviation of Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, representing men and women who fought in the great wars. On Anzac Day (25th April), each year, a dawn service is held at the monument, and at 10:00am, ex-servicemen march from the Todd Mall to the monument where a Remembrance Service is held. Anzac Hill is also a Geodetic Fundamental Point for Surveyors, and levels are taken from a marker on the hill. The hill offers wonderful views across Alice Springs and a great photo opportunity of the MacDonnell Ranges.



## **Cinema**



The Alice Springs Cinema showcases all of the popular movies that you would expect to find at a typical movie theater in the states. Most movies are featured simultaneous with their release in the states but occasionally movies are delayed from overseas release. Located on the Todd Mall, adjacent to the Al Fresco Cafe.

## **Frank McEllister Park**

The Frank McEllister Park is ideal for children of all ages and is within walking distance of many family style homes located on the West side of town. A multitude of playground equipment is available and large grass areas make convenient picnic spots.



## **Lasseters Hotel Casino**



Set against the stunning MacDonnell Ranges and overlooking one of the world's best desert golf courses, Lasseters Hotel Casino is one of the premier hotels and entertainment venues in Alice Springs. Its accommodation, rated 4.5 stars, is the highest standard available within the town, and its casino gaming rooms are world class. The function areas, traditional Irish Pub and bars make Lasseters the center for live entertainment and events. Players can choose from a variety of game tables for Blackjack, American Roulette, Baccarat, Money Wheel, Caribbean Stud, Sic Bo, Craps, Big Six and Two-Up or try one of the 250 gaming machines. Northern Territory Keno and TAB are also available as well as an electronic horse racing game.

## Telegraph Station National Park

The Alice Springs Telegraph Station is set in a National Park of 445 hectares, beside a natural spring in the Todd River, some 3 kilometers north of the town. The spring was named after Alice Todd, wife of the then Superintendent of Telegraphs for South Australia, Charles Todd, after whom the River is named.



Construction of the telegraph line began in 1871 and the first morse signals were sent along the completed southern section of the line to Port Augusta, South Australia in December of that year. The north (to Darwin) and central sections of the line were eventually joined on August 22nd, 1872 at Frew Ponds, near Dunmarra.

The Telegraph Station became the center of activity in the area and gradually outbuildings were added. These included policemen's quarters, harness and buggy sheds, a Stationmasters residence, a battery room, blacksmith's shop and a kitchen-mess room. Like the original Telegraph Station these were all built with local stone and lime mortar. They had thatched roofs which were later replaced with galvanized iron.

The Telegraph Station operated 24 hours a day and was one of 11 along the 3,000 km line, It was basically self-sufficient, relying on provisions from the south only once a year. Sheep, goats, cattle and their own vegetable garden ensured adequate food and the blacksmith made much of their equipment. The staff consisted of a Stationmaster, 4 telegraphic-linesmen, a teacher-governess, a cook, and a stockman-blacksmith. The station operated until 1932 when more modern facilities were established in the new township of Stuart, at the corner of Railway Terrace and Parsons Street.

Since its closure the original station has been, an education center for part aboriginal children (1932-42); a wartime army base (1942-1945); and an aboriginal reserve (1945-1963). In 1963, the aboriginal people moved to Amoonguna, an aboriginal settlement south-east of town which still exists today, and the station was redesignated as the Alice Springs Telegraph Station National Park.

The then Northern Territory Reserves Board (later the Conservation Commission) began a program of reconstruction of the old buildings from photographs of the settlement at the turn of the century. This resulted in a restoration of the buildings and area as it looked between 1895 and 1905. The Telegraph Station partially reopened to the public for business but now operates only on significant historic occasions when letters can be sent under the stations own franking mark to anywhere in the world.

The Telegraph Station is the original Alice Springs, and as such, an important part of a Central Australian tour. Opening times of the park are; 8am- 9pm daily, October 1st-April 30th otherwise, 8am until 7pm daily. The buildings are open from 9am to 5 pm daily and the reserve is open from 8am to 9pm. There is an admission charge to the historic buildings. \$6 adult \$3 child. (0-16)



### **Travel**

The nearest capital cities are Adelaide (1500kms south) and Darwin (1500kms north). Ayers Rock (Uluru) is about 450kms to the south west or about 5hrs driving. Kings Canyon can be reached along the Stuart Highway and Lasseter Highway.

Air travel is the best way to overcome the distances if you don't have much time. Flights to Adelaide and Darwin take about two hours. To Sydney and Perth it's about 3 hours. Local tour companies can help with flights to Ayers Rock (45min). Scenic flights operate out of Alice Springs to many of the popular tourist spots including the Rock and Kings Canyon.

Most of the major tourist attractions can be reached via sealed roads but check after the rains and local flooding as road damage and washed out crossings are common occurrences. To give you a better idea of distances look at the table below:

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Distance (kms &amp; miles)</b>	<b>Drive Time</b>
Arltunga Historical Reserve	105kms/65m	1hr 45min
Ayers Rock/Uluru	461kms/289m	4hrs 45min
Ayers Rock Resort	444kms/275m	4hrs 40min
Chambers Pillar Historical Reserve	155kms/96m	2hrs 15min
Corroboree Rock	47kms/29m	30 min
Darwin	1491kms/927m	15hrs
Devils Marbles Conservation Reserve	403kms/250m	4hrs
Ellery Creek Big Hole	96kms/60m	1hr
Emily Gap Nature Park	10kms/6m	10 min
Finke Gorge (Palm Valley)	146kms/91m	2hrs 30min
Glen Helen Gorge	132kms/82m	1hr 15min
Henbury Meteorite Craters	145kms/90m	1hr 30min
Jessie Gap Nature Park	17kms/11m	10min
Katherine	1177kms/731m	12hrs
Mt Olga/Kata Juta	500kms/311m	5hrs 15min
N'Dala Gorge	80kms/50m	1hr
Ormiston Gorge	130kms/81m	1hr 15min
Rainbow Valley	97kms/68m	1hr 45min
Redband Gorge	156kms/97m	1hr 45min
Ruby Gap	154kms/96m	2hr
Serpentine Gorge	102kms/63m	1hr
Simpsons Gap	17kms/11m	20mins
Standley Chasm	50kms/31m	30mins
Tennant Creek	504kms/313m	5hrs
Trephina Gorge	76kms/47m	45mins
Watarrka (Kings Canyon)	331kms/206m	4hrs
<b>Capital Cities</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Flight Time</b>
Sydney	2954kms/1836m	2hr 40min
Melbourne	2278kms/1416m	2hr 30min
Brisbane (flight via Sydney)	3509kms/2180m	4hrs 30min
Perth	3628kms/2254m	3hrs 40min
Adelaide	1544kms/959m	2hrs