

Perkins given 'special duties'

Aboriginal public servant, Mr Charles Perkins, has been given new duties in the Department of Aboriginal Affairs as a "temporary administrative arrangement".

Mr Perkins, an assistant secretary in the department, has been given "special duties". He said last night that he had not known of the change until yesterday morning when he had read about it in a staff circular, signed by the Secretary of the department, Mr Barrie Dexter, and dated December 2.

Mr Perkins said he had been the branch head and had been "shoved aside and put on nebulous, so-called special duties, assessed by Mr Dexter at his discretion".

He had been cut off as much as possible from the activities of the department.

It had been a political decision that had resulted in his losing status and had infringed his rights as a second-division officer.

He had not been consulted about the move, which had been made while he was on leave and when he was in Sydney on Monday and Tuesday.

He said the only remedy to the situation would be for Mr Dexter to be removed as head of the department.

There was no hope of a reconciliation between Mr Dexter and himself and he had no intention of resigning which is what Mr Dexter appeared to be trying to make him do.

Special duties could be anything or nothing and temporary appointments usually turned out to be permanent.

Mr Dexter refused to comment on the matter last night.