

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE1086

## McPherson, Shirley

(1948 - )

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**Nationality** Australian

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**Born** 1 January, 1948, Perth Western Australia Australia

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**Occupation** Accountant, Administrator

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### Summary

Shirley McPherson was born in 1948 in Perth, Western Australia. A champion schoolgirl athlete, she also excelled academically and won a teaching bursary on completing her leaving certificate at Dominican ladies college, Dongara. She completed a three-year accountancy course at the Western Australia Institute of Technology in 1967 and, in 1974, opened her own tax consultancy business in Perth. When the family moved to Geraldton, she worked as a tax agent there.

She was appointed a commissioner of the Aboriginal Development Commission in 1983 and became full-time chairperson in 1986. Despite the commission's growing budgets and staff levels, McPherson's nine fellow commissioners were dismissed by Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Gerry Hand, in 1988, and she only retained her position because it was an appointment made by the Governor-General. The new commissioners twice passed motions of censure against her.

Disappointed, McPherson resigned in 1989 and returned to Western Australia. She resumed accountancy and also worked as a consultant on Aboriginal affairs to the state government.

### Published resources

#### Edited Book

The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia : Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, society and culture, Horton, David, 1994

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

#### Author Details

Leonarda Kovacic

**Created** 23 September 2004

**Last modified** 12 February 2019