

ON THE ROAD. AN AUSTRALIAN ARCHAEOLOGIST IN-TRANSIT

July 11, 2014 Jacq Matthews Commercial Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2014 Australia, consulting, Heritage, Pilbara, professional archaeology, travel day, Western Australia



Literally pulling on my boots. Note that in addition to their obvious aesthetic value, these are also steel-capped for safety and include bonus resistance training for my legs.

As a more theoretically inclined archaeologist my usual habitat is my university department but today I actually pulled on my work boots and set out for two weeks of consulting fieldwork in the [Pilbara](#) region of Western Australia. Somewhat unfortunately for readers of this post, the 11th of July was actually my travel day. Working in remote areas as an archaeologist usually means at least one full day of travel just to get to your base (for many consultants in Australia this will mean a mining camp). Today I haven't actually left the state but was still in-transit for about 5 hours. In this short post, I want to share a few images and experiences from my work day to give you a sense of some of the more mundane, everyday realities of doing archaeology in Australia.

Luggage is always an interesting logistical concern on fieldwork, you need to be prepared for almost anything and bring it all with you, but cable ties and well-honed tetris skills can solve almost

any issue we encounter.



There is nothing quite like driving >100km after spending a few hours in a plane, but the pay-off, getting to work in an amazing archaeological landscape will be worth it.



I definitely won't be looking this happy tomorrow when I wake up at 5am (FYI, sunrise here in the Pilbara is around 6.45am at the moment; ouch!) and then spend the morning reviewing our field safety procedures and organising equipment before driving out to one of the sites we'll be working at with local Traditional Owners for the next two weeks.



Ciao!