



**Around Australia Challenge Update
- DAY 16: Fri 11-Jan-2002 -**

Port Hedland (WA) to Minilya (WA)	742 KM
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Its enough to drive you 'willy willy'. Imagine start time being 7.50 AM and the temperature already at 38 degrees C. As well as that, developing winds and the formation of mini cyclones [called in Australia willy willys] provided interest for the day. These weather conditions and the need to cover 722 KM to meet the schedule is what faced the Aurora-RMIT 101 road crew on Day 16 of their Around Australia Challenge.

On the previous night 'farmer' team member from Hamilton in Victoria, Jack McArthur, invented a way of pumping air-conditioning into the solar car from the supporting Ford Fairmont. This has worked extremely well in the stops today and has ensured that the batteries kept their cool.

The countryside looked flat but all day the convoy gained elevation. This, with the strengthening side winds and high temperatures have made for tougher driving conditions than expected. At least the skies have been clear of clouds.

Properties in this part of out-back Australia seem not to be fenced. As a result cattle freely wander on the roads and present their own form of driving hazard.

The NEC supplied satellite phones have been the only way to stay in touch with the team and during voice checks at 3.00 PM WST Peter



Day 16, Roebourne (WA) intriguing the locals. (click for a larger image)



Day 16, Port Hedland, West Australia. Another record day. (click for a larger image)



Pudney reported that ambient temperatures were consistently about 43 C with solar car temperatures hovering around 48 C. Mexican driver Rafael Carmona is doing a great back-up job to Tony Vriens and we think he is more comfortable in these higher temperatures.

The Aurora office back in Melbourne received confirmation that the leader of the Democrats political party Natasha Stott Despoja would welcome the Aurora-RMIT 101 team into Adelaide at midday on Friday 18 January. The Around Australia Challenge has captured the public imagination!

The team crossed the Tropic of Capricorn about 40 KM before their overnight stop at Minilya Roadhouse where they arrived at about 7.00 PM WST. Total trip distance on unbroken already accomplished on solar energy alone is about 8425 KM with a daily average distance of 527 KM.

Day 16, Weather forecast at Roebourne: Hot. [\(click for a larger image\)](#)



Day 16, Heading south past Tropic of Capricorn. [\(click for a larger image\)](#)