



Australian Government

Department of the  
Environment and Heritage

# Historic Shipwrecks Programme - funding

## What is the Historic Shipwrecks Programme?

The Australian Government's Historic Shipwrecks Programme implements the *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976*. It is administered by the Department of the Environment and Heritage together with its state partners (see overleaf).

The Department provides annual funding to state and territory agencies to help protect shipwrecks and their relics and to promote better understanding of their stories.

## What are its aims?

The programme aims to:

- conserve and protect historic shipwreck sites and associated material as a cultural resource of the nation
- develop a comprehensive register of historic shipwrecks and associated material
- obtain the support of an informed public for historic shipwrecks as a cultural resource, and
- promote the commitment by government authorities to the protection and preservation of historic shipwrecks and associated material.

## What is Australia's shipwreck story?

Australia has a rich maritime history which dates back to the arrival of Aboriginal people some 60 000 years ago. It includes later visits by Macassans - Indonesians from the trading centre of Macassar in Java - who came to fish Australia's northern waters for trepang or sea cucumbers.

In the 17th century, Europeans, including the Dutch, English and French, began arriving on the coast of the southern continent, having braved extraordinary distances in tiny sailing boats. The flow of ships to and from Australia has grown enormously since that time, but not without difficulties, and at times, disasters.

Today, the waters off Australia's coasts bear testament to this shipping heritage, holding fast to more than 6 500 wrecks.

These shipwrecks and associated relics often provide us with what may be the only means of documenting and understanding important aspects of our history.

## What type of projects are funded?

- Researching and conserving shipwrecks and their artefacts for example, preparing management plans for particular wreck sites, surveying and mapping areas known to have historic shipwrecks, studying the effects of tropical waters on wrecks and studying bottles collected from selected wrecks to determine their contents and historical significance.
- Making shipwrecks information more accessible for example by developing a national database of known shipwreck sites, producing publications, presenting lectures, and by creating physical and virtual reality shipwreck trails.
- Training professional shipwreck inspectors.

## CONTACTS

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### Australian Government

- **Department of the Environment and Heritage**  
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Fax 02 6274 2095  
Web <http://www.deh.gov.au/heritage/shipwrecks/index.html>
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### State and territory partners

- **New South Wales Heritage Office**  
Locked Bag 5020  
Parramatta NSW 2124  
Tel 02 9873 8500  
Fax 02 9873 8599
  - **Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory**  
PO Box 4646  
Darwin NT 0800  
Tel 08 8999 8201  
Fax 08 8999 8289
  - **Queensland Museum**  
Queensland Museum  
PO Box 3300  
South Brisbane QLD 4101  
Tel 07 3840 7659  
Fax 07 3846 1918
  - **South Australian Department for Environment and Heritage**  
Heritage Branch  
1 Richmond Road  
Keswick SA 5035  
Tel 08 8124 4979  
Fax 08 8124 4980
  - **Tasmanian Department of Tourism, Parks, Heritage and the Arts**  
GPO Box 1751  
HOBART TAS 7001  
Tel 03 6233 5732
  - **Heritage Victoria**  
GPO Box 2797Y  
Melbourne Vic 3001  
Tel 03 9655 6519  
Fax 03 9655 9720
  - **Western Australian Maritime Museum**  
Cliff Street  
Fremantle, WA 6160  
Tel 08 9431 8444  
Fax 08 9431 8492
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### Other partners

- **Norfolk Island Museum**  
Kingston  
Norfolk Island NSW 2899  
Tel 0011 672 323 788  
Fax 0011 672 323 788
  - **Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology (AIMA)**
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