

The Economics of Heritage: integrating costs and benefits of heritage into government decision making

DATA COLLECTION STANDARDS PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

Over the last 30 years government agencies have added places and objects to heritage registers, applied statutory protection measures, and administered funding programs for conservation works. This has resulted in a mass of data about the history and significance of places and objects, the nature of changes to heritage places, the allocation of funding and the impact of grant and loan programs.

The 2006 Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Conservation of Australia's Historic Heritage Places identified gaps in data available on the number, quality and composition of heritage places, and the sources and types of expenditure on conservation and the effectiveness of that spending.

Establishing data collection standards was identified as a priority project of the National Coordinated Heritage Agenda at the Hobart meeting of the Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC) in 2006. EPHC has since endorsed the scope of the project, which includes around 20 discrete datasets. Heritage Victoria is leading the Data Collection Standards project on behalf of EPHC.

This paper sets out the background to the project and the key drivers informing it. The agreed scope of the EPHC Data Collections Standards Project is outlined and more detailed information is given on the three initial datasets that will be collected as part of the first stage. The Victorian State of the Historic Environment survey is also discussed.

INTRODUCTION

The conservation of cultural heritage has been a significant activity of Commonwealth, State, Territory and local Governments for well over 30 years.

In that time government agencies have added places and objects to heritage registers, administered permitting and consent processes, managed grant programs for conservation works, undertaken and supported research programs, provided technical advice and run information, education and interpretation programs.

This has resulted in a mass of data about the history and significance of places and objects. This includes: the nature of changes to places, the efficiency and effectiveness of permitting and other approval processes, the allocation of grants and loans and the impact of funding programs, the nature of research projects and the

level of interest in heritage demonstrated through interpretation and education programs.

This data has not, to date, been collected in a consistent way or recorded in a single location making comparisons within, and across jurisdictions very difficult. Different legislative requirements and reporting regimes have meant that even similar appearing datasets may be based on very different assumptions or methods of collections. This situation was highlighted by the difficulty in providing consistent data across State and Territory jurisdiction to the Commonwealth's quinquennial State of the Environment Reports¹ and the submissions made to the 2006 Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Conservation of Australia's Historic Heritage Places².

The Cooperative National Heritage Agenda for Australia has identified the development of national standards for data collection and reporting measures as a priority project.

DISCUSSION

Drivers

Since 1996 the Commonwealth Government's quinquennial State of the Environment report has included indicators on cultural heritage. This has included a sample survey of 1,250 places on the Register of National Estate (RNE), and datasets from obtained for State and Territory heritage agencies. The Commonwealth continues to be unable to rely on a set of national data collected in a similar manner across jurisdictions.

All States and Territories now prepare State of the Environment Reports. The approach to and reporting of, cultural heritage differs from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

The Productivity Commission report in 2006 into the Conservation of the Historic Environment made comment about the difficulty of its task given the dearth of available data to describe the extensive activities across the country.

Analysis of the types and extent of government involvement in historic heritage places is made more difficult by the lack of readily available and reliable data.³

This led to the Commission being unable to draw conclusions regarding funding and resources that many operating in the heritage sector though were self-evident.

The Commission has been unable to derive an accurate assessment of the mix and condition of listed historic heritage places, and of trends in condition/quality. Nor have we been able to establish the overall expenditure on the conservation of historic heritage places by governments or by the private sector, in any jurisdiction, nor any reasonable breakdown of expenditure by type of heritage asset, whether was for publicly or privately owned heritage places, or whether expenditures were for identification/research, repairs/maintenance or presentation/celebration. Therefore, the Commission is unable to make any recommendations about the adequacy or efficiency of current levels of expenditure.

In pursuing such data, it will be necessary for the Australian and State governments to provide clear guidelines to their heritage agencies and local government on what to collect and how to account for it (e.g., information on relevant accounting practices for the separate reporting of ‘additional’ heritage-related costs).⁴

The Victorian Government in its submission⁵ in response to the Commission’s draft report questioned the relative costs and benefits of capturing detailed information on expenditure on heritage conservation activities suggested in the final paragraph of the extract quoted above.

The Victorian Government questions the practicality and compliance costs of capturing and reporting the expenditure on ‘heritage conservation’ of its own assets as opposed to normal cyclical maintenance or periodic repair. Differentiating between what constitutes repair and maintenance costs of any asset and the additional costs, if any, associated with a heritage listed asset is difficult and potentially costly.⁶

The Productivity Commission’s finding 3.1 and recommendation 3.1 provide a significant driver for the Data Collection Project.

FINDING 3.1

Little reliable statistical information is available on the conservation of Australia’s historic heritage — the number, quality and composition of listed places; the nature, source and types of expenditures on historic heritage conservation; or the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of those expenditures.

RECOMMENDATION 3.1

All levels of government should put in place measures for collecting, maintaining and disseminating relevant data series on the conservation of Australia’s historic heritage places.⁷

Responses to the Productivity Commission Report by the Chairs of the State and Territory Heritage Councils⁸ and the Commonwealth Government⁹ reiterated the need for this project as part of the Cooperative National Heritage Agenda for Australia. The Commonwealth’s response also makes reference to the parallel Inventory and Information Portal Project, which will upgrade the Australian Heritage Places Inventory.

While providing in principle support the Chairs of the State and Territory Heritage Councils with finding 3.1 and recommendation 3.1 they note:

... it must be recognised that producing nationally comparable data will take time to achieve due to differing levels of resources, variations in accounting systems, and varying interpretations as to what constitutes a heritage-related cost.¹⁰

Very little data is collected on the performance of local government authorities in managing heritage conservation statutes and programs. There has been a massive increase in the activity of local government in this respect, particularly in urban planning programs. There is undoubtedly data collected as part of planning operations statistics but there is little separation of the heritage components of this data, and no mechanism of capturing this across the states. At this stage little data from local government will be collated.

Data Collection Project

The Data Collection Project builds on the Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand (HCOANZ) sponsored project to collect and compare performance data across Australia. The results of this data were interesting to individual States and Territories but were of little use as nationally comparable material because of different legislation and processes operating across the various jurisdictions. All heritage agencies maintain some level of performance data, which is used to report to parliaments and the community on an annual basis. No doubt this data is backed up by more detailed information.

The aim of the Data Collection Standards Project¹¹ as agreed by the EPHC in 2006 is to identify common data that will inform Australian practice on heritage management and to develop a framework for its collection and dissemination.

The main objective of this project is to establish sets of standard data which can inform governments, the community and heritage agencies on the:

1. The extent and scope of Australia's heritage including:
 - the number of statutorily listed heritage places in Australia
 - the type of heritage places listed in Australia.
2. The state and condition of these heritage places
3. The economic, social and environmental impact of heritage programs including the:
 - efficiency of heritage conservation programs across Australia
 - effectiveness of those programs.

Coordination with other government data programs involving heritage (such as the Cultural Heritage Ministers Statistics Working Group) will take place to maximise the benefits of this project.

Datasets

The project will collect both qualitative and quantitative data which addresses these issues. 21 datasets have been identified in the agreed project scope covering a wide range of indicator types. Those datasets identified as a priority in the project scope are identified with an asterisk (*).

QUALITATIVE DATA

1. Attitudinal data*
2. Accessibility data
3. Level of research
4. Condition of recognised heritage places*
5. Quality of works undertaken to heritage places*

6. The cumulative impact of change
7. Performance of local government

QUANTATIVE DATA

8. Number and type of place or object recognised as heritage
9. \$ value of places or objects recognised as heritage
10. \$ value invested in places on an annual basis*
11. \$ value of regular maintenance work carried out on heritage places
12. Value of any financial and other returns from investment in heritage*
13. Number of places subject to heritage program funding in any one year*
14. Level of public investment in heritage conservation*
15. Number of people employed undertaking conservation work in any one year
16. Number of visitors to heritage sites
17. Number of volunteer hours directed at heritage conservation and presentation
18. Number of development applications affecting heritage places and number of applications refused on heritage grounds per annum
19. Number of emergency listings made per annum
20. Local government performance
21. Provision of heritage guidance and support provided by government

With no specific budget provided by the Commonwealth, State or Territory Heritage Offices to this project the initial datasets to be collected were further refined. The Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand meeting in Sydney in September 2007 identified three datasets, which should be collected for all jurisdictions to collect at little or no cost. Namely, the:

1. number and type of place or object recognised as heritage
2. \$ value invested in places on an annual basis
3. number of places subject to heritage funding in any one year.

These three datasets specifically address finding 3.1 of the Productivity Commission report. Once the collection, storage and reporting of these three datasets is established practise across Australia other datasets will be integrated into the project.

Dataset 1: Number and type of place or object recognised as heritage

The number and type of recognised heritage places and objects is the most common type of data collected, but rarely collected in a fashion that demonstrates much about the state of the historic environment. Emphasis will be placed on obtaining data on the heritage typology and nature of significance of each place or object. In the first instance it is proposed to identify the current number and type of heritage places and objects and those added during the previous financial year. Once established, and collected on an annual basis, this dataset would provide meaningful data on trends in heritage listing and chart changes in community values.

The existing data sources that will be drawn upon for this information are: the Commonwealth Governments' National and Commonwealth Heritage Lists, the State and Territory heritage lists and local planning scheme controls.

To enable comparisons to be made about place type and significance standardised taxonomies will be needed. The place types used in the surveys of places on the RNE for the 2001 and 2006 Commonwealth State of the Environment Reports are one

option¹², and other is to use the 40 place ‘groups’ adopted by the New South Wales Heritage Office and Heritage Victoria for the administration of their registers.

The values or criteria under which places are included on the registers differ considerably from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The standard criteria adopted at the 1998 Conference on Heritage (HERCON) are based on the longstanding, and much used, Australian Heritage Commission criteria for the RNE. However, retrospectively categorising places into these may prove too time consuming for some jurisdictions. An alternative is to use the broader significance categories included within the Burra Charter¹³; namely aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value. In most cases the categorisation of significance types is likely to have to be a manual exercise.

Dataset 2: \$ value invested in places on an annual basis

The dollar value invested in places on an annual basis is often collected as part of development approval applications. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to separate heritage conservation spending from other works associated with heritage places. Most heritage conservation projects take place in the context of other refurbishment or development projects. A more helpful definition of investment in heritage places would be to consider all conservation, repair, maintenance and improvement (CRMI) expenditure and only exclude the cost of new developments that occur adjacent to heritage places on registered land. This information needs to be compared against all activity in the construction industry as collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. It is not proposed to attempt to capture the ‘additional’ heritage-related costs recommended by the Productivity Commission¹⁴.

This approach to considering CRMI expenditure rather than just the additional repairs and maintenance costs (if any) associated with the heritage nature of the property is consistent with the wider definition of ‘conservation’ included in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter¹⁵ or the Victorian *Heritage Act 1995*¹⁶. If the separation of CRMI from the other development costs associated with permits and consents is too difficult for States and Territories to achieve then this dataset may have to be limited to total development cost.

It is acknowledged that it will only be possible to collect this information on places on the State and Territory heritage lists and a large proportion of the work to places covered by local planning controls would not be captured in any form. The value of permits or consents applied for but refused will be identified separately in order to provide an indication for the cost of lost development potential.

Data sources would include the information obtained by State and Territory Heritage Offices during development application permit and consent processes.

Dataset 3: Number of places subject to heritage program funding in any one year

The number of places receiving heritage program funding dataset will obtain data specific to government funding programs and would provide information on the total value of funding programs, number of applicants, value of eligible applications, number of projects supported, value of supported projects, level of funding from other sources (leveraging). Information will also be sought on the locations of projects that grant funding is directed to. These location types would include capital city CBD, inner suburban, outer suburban, regional centre, rural.

Data sources for this dataset include the Commonwealth's National Heritage Investment Initiative, State and Territory grant programs and State funded local government grant programs. This data should allow the identification of the amount of oversubscription of existing programs and the multiplier, or leveraging effect, of heritage funding. Capturing information on the leveraging of funding from other sources will quantify one of the major benefits of public investment in heritage conservation.

Additional data needed could be collected by agencies as part of application forms or grant conditions. Other incentives, such as tax incentive schemes will be unable to be included in this dataset at this stage, but may require new datasets in the future.

Victorian State of the Historic Environment Survey

Heritage Victoria, through the strategy *Victoria's Heritage: Strengthening our communities*, commissioned a Victorian State of the Historic Environment Survey based on the methodology used by the 2001 and 2006 Commonwealth State of the Environment Report for the historic heritage places indicators¹⁷.

The survey is assessing the condition, integrity, use, public access, interpretation and quality of conservation works and impact of climate change on the 2,100 places and objects on the Victorian Heritage Register. The significant cost of undertaking this survey (c. \$140,000) means that it is not an affordable proposition for all jurisdictions. This study is due to be completed in March 2008, and it is anticipated it will contribute to the Victorian Government's State of the Historic Environment Report, the Heritage Council's reporting requirements under s.8(1)(a) of the Heritage Act, and inform programs such as the Heritage Victoria and the Heritage Council of Victoria's grants and Heritage at Risk programs.

CONCLUSION

The lack of consistent heritage data has long been an issue for heritage practitioners and policy makers in Australia. The legislative and procedural differences between the Commonwealth, States and Territories and Local Governments makes consistent data collection difficult and comparisons across different jurisdictions difficult to draw.

The various drivers identified including the Commonwealth, State and Territory State of the Environment Reports and the 2006 Productivity Commission Inquiry clearly demonstrate the need for improved and more comprehensive data collection. Overseas, datasets such as those published by English Heritage annually in Heritage Counts¹⁸ demonstrate the importance and relevance of publicly accessible data.

In its first phase, the Data Collection Standards Project will capture the key datasets on the nature of heritage places, the expenditure on them and the incentives (grants) provided to them. This project will directly address recommendation 3.1 of the 2006 Productivity Commission Inquiry, but is only a first step. Once the collection and reporting of first three datasets is established EPHC and HCOANZ priorities can be re-evaluated to identify the next datasets to be collected. The management, methods of dissemination and analysis of the datasets also needs to be resolved. The data should provide evidence of broad trends over time and the macro differences between

jurisdictions. It will not address the issue of the direct costs and benefits of heritage listing.

This project does not come with any particular budget within Heritage Victoria or any inter-jurisdictional funding, which limits the staff and other resources available to undertake the project. The timeframe for the first round of reporting is proposed to be the end of the 2007/08 financial year.

¹ Australia: State of the Environment 1996, 2001 and 2006 (see <http://www.environment.gov.au/soe/index.html>)

² Productivity Commission 2006, *Conservation of Australia's Historic Heritage Places*, Report No. 37, Canberra

³ Ibid., p. 39

⁴ Ibid., pp. 40-41

⁵ Productivity Commission 2005, *Conservation of Australia's Historic Heritage Places*, Draft Report, December

⁶ Victorian Government 2006, *Victorian Government Response to the Productivity Commission's Draft Report On The Conservation Of Australia's Historic Heritage Places*, February

⁷ Productivity Commission 2006, loc. cit.

⁸ Chairs of the State and Territory Heritage Councils 2006, *Response by the Chairs of the State and Territory Heritage Councils of Australia to the Productivity*, November, p.2.

⁹ Australian Government 2007, *Commonwealth Government Response To The Productivity Commission Inquiry Into The Conservation Of Australia's Historic Heritage Places*, May, p.1.

¹⁰ Chairs of the State and Territory Heritage Councils 2006, op. cit., p.4.

¹¹ Refer to Appendix 1: National Co-ordinated Heritage Agenda Data Collection Standards (Cultural Heritage) Scoping Paper [version 2, September 2007]

¹² Pearson M and Marshall D 2006, *Study of the condition and integrity of historic heritage places for the 2006 State of Environment Report*, technical report for the Department of Environment and Heritage, Canberra, pp 4-5.

¹³ Australia ICOMOS 1999, *The Australia ICOMOS charter for the conservation of places of cultural significance*, "The Burra Charter"

¹⁴ Productivity Commission 2006, op. cit., p.41.

¹⁵ "Conservation means all the processes of looking after a *place* so as to retain its *cultural significance*." Ibid., Article 1.4.

¹⁶ "conservation" includes –

- a) the retention of the cultural heritage significance of the place; and
- b) any maintenance, preservation, restoration, reconstruction or sustainable use of a place or object.

s.3, *Heritage Act* 1995 [Victoria]

¹⁷ Refer to Pearson M and Marshall D 2006, opt. cit.

¹⁸ Heritage Counts 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007 (see www.heritagecounts.org.uk).

APPENDIX

NATIONAL CO-ORDINATED HERITAGE AGENDA DATA COLLECTION STANDARDS (CULTURAL HERITAGE) SCOPING PAPER

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The conservation of cultural heritage has been a significant activity of Commonwealth, State, territory and local Governments for well over 30 years.

In that time government agencies have added places and objects to heritage registers, applied statutory protection measures, administered funding programs for conservation works, undertaken and supported research programs, provided technical advice and run information, education and interpretation programs.

This has resulted in a mass of data about the history and significance of places and objects, the nature of changes to places of heritage significance, the efficiency and effectiveness of permitting and approval processes, the allocation of grants and loans and the impact of funding programs, the nature of research projects and the level of interest in interpretation and education programs.

Every 5 years the Commonwealth Government prepares a State of the Environment report. This report includes a chapter on cultural heritage and every 5 years it seems that the Commonwealth is unable to rely on a set of national data collected in a similar manner across jurisdictions.

All States and Territories now prepare State of the Environment Reports. The approach to cultural heritage differs from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

The recently completed Productivity Commission report into the Conservation of the Historic Environment made comment about the difficulty of its task given the dearth of available data to describe the extensive activities across the country. Data sets such as those published by English Heritage annually (Heritage Counts etc) demonstrate the importance and relevance of publicly accessible data.

Most heritage agencies maintain some level of performance data, which is used to report to parliaments and the community on an annual basis. No doubt this data is backed up by more detailed information.

Several years ago the Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand (HCOANZ) sponsored a project to collect and compare performance data across Australia. The results of this data were interesting to individual jurisdictions but of little use as nationally comparable material because of different legislation and processes operating across jurisdictions.

Very little data is collected on the performance of local government authorities in managing heritage conservation statutes and programs. There has been a massive increase in the activity of local government in this respect, particularly in urban

planning programs. There is undoubtedly data collected as part of planning operations statistics but there is little separation of the heritage components of this data.

The Cooperative National heritage Agenda for Australia recently has identified the development of national standards for data collection and reporting measures as a priority project.

AIM

To identify common data that will inform Australian practice on heritage management and to develop a framework for its collection and dissemination.

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this project is to establish a set/s of standard data which can inform governments, the community and heritage agencies on the:

1. The extent and scope of Australia's heritage including;
 - the number of statutorily listed heritage places in Australia, and
 - the type of heritage places listed in Australia.
4. The state and condition of these heritage places;
5. The economic, social and environmental impact of heritage programs including the;
 - efficiency of heritage conservation programs across Australia, and
 - effectiveness of those programs.

The aim should be to collect both qualitative and quantitative data which addresses these issues.

Coordination with other government data programs involving heritage (Cultural Heritage Ministers Statistics Working Group) is needed to maximise the benefits of this project.

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

Qualitative data is important as it provides information on the public's attitudes to heritage, and tests the effectiveness and efficiency of current programs used to manage it. The types of qualitative data needed include:

1. **Attitudinal Data:** the work of Allen's Consulting in surveying community attitudes with respect to heritage conservation is an excellent start to gathering a body of knowledge about community perceptions and beliefs. This work needs to be carried out as part of the SOE cycle and additional questions can be added to target measuring outcomes of programs. A standardised set of questions needs to be agreed for ongoing and additional specific questions agreed by the HCOANZ prior to each cycle. Specific data can be collected to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of programs as necessary.

2. **Accessibility Data:** the accessibility of heritage to the broader community is a product of participation, visitation and availability of places and objects for participation and visitation.
3. **Level of Research:** the number of research projects which could be described as heritage projects would be difficult to quantify. Even with a strict definition the value of those projects is essentially a qualitative measure.
4. **Condition of recognised heritage places:** There have been several efforts at collecting this information around Australia. For the past 2 Commonwealth State of the Environment reports a sample of places across the country has been visited and a qualitative assessment of their condition has been made. Several years ago Heritage Victoria undertook a survey of owners of heritage registered places and requested that they undertake a qualitative assessment of the condition of their property and the WA Heritage Council has undertaken a similar project using the services of local government officers. One of the best known programs of this kind is English Heritage's Buildings at Risk Register. Standardised criteria for measuring condition is needed which could be cascaded across all levels of government and NGOs. Data framework needs to include identification of risks and causes of problems.

Recent initiatives in relation to measuring the effect of climate change on world heritage places have highlighted this problem and a response to this issue is now urgent. This data collection underpins the SOE reporting, which to date has been done on a limited sampling basis without a national framework in place.

5. **Quality of works undertaken to heritage places:** there is very little information collected or judgement made about the quality of works undertaken, either through public grant programs or privately funded conservation and/or development projects. Such information collection would probably need to be done on a sampling basis across the country. Standardised criteria for assessing quality need to be developed and cascaded across government organisations and this could be tied in with agency compliance programs.
6. **The cumulative impact of change:** there is currently no data available to assess the success of policy and legislation in conserving heritage. Studies in the UK on the cumulative effect of change on conservation areas has assisted in testing policies and planning instruments and making adjustments to improve outcomes. This data is closely related to 4, and 5 above.
7. **Performance of local government:** standardised criteria to identify local councils meeting best practice can be identified and used to ascertain no of councils meeting this e.g. no of councils with advisers, with local funds, heritage committees. (See also no. 20 in quantitative data).

QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

The collection of quantitative data captures the capacity and resources available in the public, private and voluntary sector to secure long-term sustainability of Australia's heritage and includes the following:

8. **Number and type of place or object recognised as heritage:** this is the most common type of data collected, but rarely collected in a fashion that demonstrates much about the state of the historic environment. Clearly more emphasis needs to be placed on typological analysis and the nature of significance to establish meaningful data on trends and community expectations. This data needs to be able to be presented as a % of total land parcels in Australia, States and local government areas.
9. **\$ value of places and objects identified as heritage:** his data is possibly the most difficult to collect, however there are potentially enough studies and methods that have been tested to establish/agree one method for common data collection or comparison. As long as the method is agreed comparisons can be made as to level of value in comparison to non-heritage places.
10. **\$ value invested in places on an annual basis:** this is data that is often collected as part of development approval applications. Whilst it is often mixed up with the overall cost of projects it should be possible to separate out the value of heritage conservation projects and therefore come up with useful data about the level of annual investment. This data needs to be also calculated as a % of total \$ spent in construction, to establish to contribution to the industry overall and determine whether there are difference sin different parts of the country. For example in rural areas, the repair and maintenance is likely to be a larger sector than new build, and heritage conservation may be vital to retaining skilled builders in local communities.
11. **\$ value of regular maintenance works carried out to heritage places:** this data may be difficult to acquire but could be achieved through cooperation of government and NGO asset managers. It will be useful in ascertaining the role of heritage maintenance in the construction sector and in relation to queries regarding the costs of ownership for heritage place owners in comparison to non-heritage buildings.
12. **Value of any financial and other returns from investment in heritage projects:** this would be difficult to ascertain in a broad way and would probably require an assessment of specific projects where owners/developers were prepared to reveal financial information about the project. It could be achieved by a standard survey to major developers of heritage assets. Comparison with non-heritage investment projects would be useful.
13. **Number of places subject to heritage program funding in any one year:** this data would be specific to government funding programs and would involve agencies from each jurisdiction providing details of all the projects funded in any one year, the time frame for completion of projects, etc. Data should also identify the multiplier effect of the funding and employment generator figures. This data can be collected by agencies as part of grant conditions.
14. **Level of public investment in heritage conservation:** the preparation of “Making Heritage Happen” endeavoured to establish data on this but found it a difficult task because of the different ways in which different jurisdictions set their budgets and report on expenditure. However it should be possible to establish a

series of discrete measures that could be collated on an annual basis to establish trends (see also 10 above).

15. **Number of people employed in undertaking conservation work in any one year:** this would be a difficult figure to determine, however the Australian Bureau of Statistics may be able to assist in providing a specific measure. Development application forms could be used to collect this data – a method trialled in NSW. Data relating to permanent jobs created through conservation of places is also a useful data set that demonstrates heritage role in the business sector. In rural communities this can be significant. NSW has attempted to collect this data through their grant program.
16. **Number of visitors to heritage sites:** whilst the National Trust and other heritage organisations should be able to provide definitive data for visitation to their sites it would be difficult to provide detailed comprehensive information for all sites and types of heritage. The Cultural Minister’s Statistical Working Group currently collects data for a limited no. of sites and there data collection could be expanded to provide this. Also the state tourism agencies and the Australian Tourism Commission collect general data on the purpose of visits to the country and individual states and in association with samples from specific sites should be able to relatively easily provide a profile of the nature and extent of visitation.
17. **Number of volunteer hours directed at heritage conservation and presentation:** once again organisations like the National Trust would be able to provide good figures on their use of volunteer labour, however this is but part of the total picture with many volunteer hours utilised by local historical societies, etc. Once again it would seem that a sampling approach to this would need to be taken to discern trends rather than establishing absolute figures. The development of a standardised framework for collection of this data would assist. Insurance purposes require that voluntary organisations collect this data and this information could be aligned.
18. **Number of development applications affecting heritage places and number of applications refused on heritage grounds per annum:** this information assist in determining the efficiency of the current system and the policies used to determine appropriate change to heritage places.
19. **Number of emergency listings made per annum:** will assist in measuring the effectiveness of a strategic heritage management system as the system continues to move from a reactive to a proactive one. .
20. **Local government performance:** data on the management by local government can be collated by establishing a standard framework for reporting for SOE reports. Data should include no. of councils with heritage advisors, with heritage schedules, local heritage funds, and local committees (see also 7 above).
21. **Provision of heritage guidance and support provided by government agencies:** government heritage support is effective in leveraging its programs through partnerships and various medium – such as websites, publications and so on. Data on the number of guidelines provided and downloads from websites from the public would be useful to determine which subject areas are in most demand

and to determine audience groups and demonstrate the effectiveness of policy programs. This sort of data would also be useful for agencies to build business cases and target partnership programs and grants. For example NSW supports a cemeteries advisor at the NSW National Trusts. Information on the no. of public enquiries pa. and the type of advice requested – if available nationally would assist in determining what the most important issues are and the most effective means of communicating the advice and targeting training programs. Data on the number of training days provided by agencies by user groups is also of growing importance and needed to leverage into other government education and skill building initiatives.

SETTING A STRATEGY

In setting a strategy for this project it is necessary to go back to the stated objectives.

- 1. The extent and scope of Australia's heritage**
- 2. The condition of these heritage places**

The strategy in order to meet this objective would be to establish and apply a measure of condition with benchmarks designed to define levels of condition or at least places at risk. This would involve:

- Identify and agree national standards that have relevance at all 3 levels of government for relative condition of heritage places (NSW has minimum standards of repair that provide a benchmark below which places are “at risk”, which could be used as a tarring point) .
- Establish framework, methodology and nationally agreed templates for data collection and methodology
- Agree cycles of data collection aligned with SOE
- Seek funding commitments from government to carry out work for agreed cycles (NGOs could be involved in this work)
- Agree reporting methods roles and responsibilities.

- 3. The economic, social and environmental impact of heritage programs including:**

- a. The efficiency of heritage programs across Australia, and**
- b. The effectiveness of those programs.**

The strategy here could be extremely broad and involve the collection of an equally broad range of data. It would seem appropriate to initially focus on the social (in particular attitudinal) impacts and economic impacts. Some of these data sets provide information on both effectiveness and efficiency of the system.

a) The efficiency of heritage conservation programs across Australia

The strategy should be to establish whether the community is getting value for its investment in heritage. In order to do this there needs to be a measure of the cost of particular programs, how many successful projects were completed and whether or not they were completed within a timely way.

This involves:

- Level of public investment in heritage conservation,
- Number of places subject to heritage program funding in any one year,
- \$ value invested in places on an annual basis,

- Value of any financial and other returns from investment in heritage projects,
- The number of places receiving funding
- The level and scope of research projects,
- Performance of local government,
- \$ value of heritage places,
- The number of volunteer hours directed at heritage conservation and presentation, (link to Cultural Ministers data work)
- The number of development applications processed affecting heritage agencies
- The provision of heritage guidance and support provided by heritage agencies, including training days.

b) Effectiveness of heritage programs across Australia

The strategy in this case should be to determine whether investment in heritage is effective in achieving good conservation outcomes and is delivering good conservation outcomes for the community. This would involve:

- Public attitudes to heritage and its value
- \$ value of heritage places and objects
- Accessibility data
- Level of public investment in heritage conservation
- \$ value invested in places on an annual basis including maintenance work
- Quality of works undertaken to heritage places
- The cumulative impact of change to heritage places
- The performance of local government
- The number of people employed in undertaking conservation work
- Number of visitors to heritage places (link to Cultural Ministers' data work)
- Number of development applications refused of heritage grounds as % total
- The number of emergency heritage listing made
- The provision of heritage guidance and support provided by heritage agencies, including training days.

SCOPE OF PROJECT

Therefore, it would seem that a limited range of the above data collection exercises should be focused on the following 7 individual data collection projects:

1. Level of public investment in heritage conservation
2. Number of places subject to heritage program funding in any one year
3. \$ value invested in places on an annual basis
4. Value of any financial and other returns from investment in heritage projects
5. Condition of recognised heritage places
6. Quality of works undertaken to heritage places

7. Attitudinal Data: public attitudes to heritage and its value

1. Level of public investment in heritage conservation

Propose that this project be undertaken and completed by an officer of one of the agencies.

The difficulties experienced in making an assessment of this level of public investment in the preparation of the “Making Heritage Happen (MHH)” report has already been mentioned. However it should be possible to establish a series of measures which can be used on an annual basis to establish a picture of this across the country. The sequence of actions in this project could look something like:

- Review the measures used and figures collected for “MHH” (desktop)
- Seek the views of different agencies as to their capacity to report on those measures and to indicate what things would be picked up under the specific measures and what important elements of public expenditure would fail to be picked up.
- Establish a revised set of measures with guidance as to what information is sought.

2. Number of places subject to heritage program funding in any one year:

It is proposed that this be project managed by one of the agencies with a standard report form being designed for completion and submission by all agencies.

This is an easy measure to pursue. All jurisdictions should be able to complete returns on funded projects with some description of type of place and nature of works. The sequence of actions should be:

- Determine the categories of information to be sought.
- Design the format of the annual return
- Trial the return

3. \$ value invested in places on an annual basis:

It is proposed that this project be managed by one of the agencies. It is likely that a budget will need to be allocated to obtain necessary advice and commission the preparation of a data collection system.

Where development projects are being assessed by state and territory government agencies it should be possible to separate out the overall cost of a project from the heritage conservation components. For example in Victoria applicants for permits under the Heritage Act are required to nominate the value of the project. It would not be too difficult to seek additional information (or make an assessment within the agency) as to the value of the heritage conservation elements of the project.

Establishing a similar process across local government approvals would be more difficult and in order to obtain a useful data set it may be necessary to establish a sampling mechanism. It may be useful to seek the advice of an economic analyst or Australian Bureau of Statistics as to how to best establish this data. Therefore the initial sequence of actions should be:

- Seek advice on data collection
- As a consequence design a data collection system

- Seek comments from all jurisdictions on their ability to provide the data.

4. Value of any financial and other returns from investment in heritage projects:

This also requires a project manager and a budget to commission professional advice on data collection format and a plan to gather information.

As indicated above this would not be able to be collected for all projects and would require the co-operation of property developers and owners to ascertain benefits. It would therefore seem best to formulate a brief for the provision of professional advice on the best way to achieve this objective along with (if feasible) the development of a data collection project plan. Therefore the immediate sequence of actions should be to:

- Prepare a brief for the provision of advice on the best way to collect data
- Seek views and agreement of different jurisdictions on approach (this may involve the agreement of relevant governments or ministers and/or consultation with owner representatives)
- Seek professional advice on a project plan for the data collection
- Gain agreement from all jurisdictions to the plan and approach.

5. Condition of recognised heritage places:

Initially this simply requires an agency to take up the task of preparing an options paper for consideration. It is most likely that a budget would need to be directed to the project at a later stage.

The options for this project vary from the extensive and resource intensive approach taken by English Heritage through to the simpler and less resource intensive approaches taken by the WA Heritage Council and Heritage Victoria. Before a project plan can be adopted for this exercise there needs to be further discussion between all agencies. So the immediate sequence of actions should be to:

- Prepare an options paper for considerations by officials from across all jurisdictions
- Agree an approach.

6. Quality of works undertaken to heritage places:

This requires a project manager and a budget to commission external reviewers. It is closely linked to the Condition work and should build on the established standards developed for that project.

This is an audit project and as indicated above this would inevitably need to be undertaken through sampling projects of different types of places and different locations across the country. It would probably be best undertaken by an independent reviewer(s) who would be required to measure the quality of works against specific measures. For example; whether a proper conservation plan was prepared prior to works commencing, did the works follow that plan?, did unpredicted difficulties arise and how were they handled?, were expert trades used for the works?, does the quality of specific elements meet accepted standards?, what was the level of acceptance for

the works and what external acknowledgements were achieved? The sequence of actions should be:

- Develop a detailed project plan
- Circulate to all jurisdictions for comment
- Refine plan
- Gain agreement from all jurisdictions to plan and for funding to carry out survey
- Engage survey team(s)

7. **Attitudinal Data:**

This requires a budget to further commission the work undertaken in 2005. HCOANZ agreed in 2006 to do this work in 2009 and at a minimum in cycles to inform the SOE reporting.

This project should be a continuation of the attitudinal survey work undertaken by Allen Consulting as part of the preparation of the HCAOANZ submission to the Productivity Commission. Advice should be sought as to how often this data should be collected and whether there is a need for any refinement of the details of the project. Other than that there should be an early re-engagement with this project. The immediate sequence of actions is:

- Seek advice from ***on the best way forward for this project.
- Commission the completion of the next round of survey work.

PROJECT COSTS

Most components of the project require project management with several of them being able to be pursued directly by whoever undertakes that role. The best arrangement would be for the various jurisdictions to contribute a sum to enable such a project manager to be employed within one of the agencies. Alternatively the project management skills of the NEPC could be sought to assist with the project. This would also require the contribution of a sum from each of the agencies.

The immediate need for external consultation arises for:

Project 3: \$ value invested in places on an annual basis:

- Seek advice on data collection
- As a consequence design a data collection system

Project 4: Value of any financial and other returns from investment in heritage projects:

- Prepare a brief for the provision of advice on the best way to collect data
- Seek professional advice on a project plan for the data collection.

Project 6: Quality of works undertaken to heritage places:

- Engage survey team(s).

Project 7: Attitudinal Data:

- Seek advice from *** on the best way forward for this project.
- Commission the completion of the next round of survey work.