



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

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DRAFT INDIGENOUS ART COMMERCIAL CODE OF CONDUCT

A draft code of conduct for fair and ethical trade in the Indigenous visual art industry was released today for public comment.

Minister for the Arts Peter Garrett said the code will help Indigenous artists negotiate fair pay for their work and give buyers greater certainty of an artwork's origin and ownership.

"This industry code of conduct is designed to promote good business practice in the Indigenous visual art sector, including transparency in transactions between artists and the marketplace.

"It specifies a set of minimum standards for dealers, agents and artists, and defines terms of trade and rights and responsibilities for the sale and management of artworks. The code has been developed with industry input to be consistent with ACCC best practice principles for voluntary codes.

"The implementation of a code of conduct was a key recommendation of the Senate Inquiry report into the Indigenous visual arts and craft sector, and it was part of this Government's election platform.

"The Cultural Ministers Council agreed in October that putting an industry code in place was essential for the future of the Indigenous visual arts industry and the Australia Council was asked to prepare a consultation draft by the end of 2008.

"The Australia Council will now conduct a wide-ranging national consultation process and I'd like to encourage everyone with an interest in the industry to provide feedback and comments before the code is finalised.

"This is an opportunity for interested individuals and organisations to have their say and it is critical that views are canvassed to ensure the Code's successful operation and to encourage take-up across the Indigenous visual arts sector.

"I would like to thank the range of individuals and organisations, including the Australia Council, that have invested significant time and effort in developing the Code to this stage."

Comments can be made on the draft Indigenous Art Commercial Code of Conduct at www.australiacouncil.gov.au/indigenousartconsult before 20 March 2009.