

The existence of a management plan does not guarantee that sufficient funds are available to implement it in its entirety. However, newly acquired areas are protected from major threatening processes, such as land clearing and over-grazing, and are managed within an overarching legislative framework in relation to State or Territory responsibilities for the protection of flora and fauna, particularly threatened flora and fauna. There also may be regional plans for the management of protected areas, or specifically for the management of rare and threatened flora and fauna. For example, in Western Australia there are regional plans for the management of Declared Rare Flora species, wherever they may be found (see the Biodiversity Theme Report for a discussion of management plans).

It has already been noted that the acquisition of land for nature conservation can protect Indigenous places. But this depends on the existence of an integrated management system which aims to protect both natural and cultural values through a plan of management principles and practices. Because this is not a high priority in most jurisdictions, Indigenous places in reserved areas may therefore be inadvertently damaged or neglected.

Many areas added to the reserve system as a result of the Regional Forest Agreement process are still protected under the forest management planning process, as they are yet to be formally gazetted as protected areas. These include many places listed in the Register of the National Estate. The process of developing management plans will commence only after they are gazetted.

Despite multiple agency management plans mentioning the significance of a heritage place and the need for its conservation, even in gazetted reserves, this does not ensure that there is follow-up action, as the Dalrymple Track case study shows (see 'The Dalrymple Track' box on page 87).

### Use of historic heritage legislation

The extent of historic heritage legislation across all jurisdictions in Australia has been discussed in the first section of this report. Some of the legislation covers Indigenous and natural heritage items as well, but most of the legislation discussed here is targeted primarily at historic heritage places. The degree to which legislation is used could be seen as a measure of the effectiveness of government in its commitment to heritage protection.

However, interpreting the extent to which legislation is used can be extremely complicated. In some jurisdictions, for example, the government or its heritage agency might be trying to find other ways of achieving conservation outcomes without resorting to legislated powers. For example, in New South Wales the government decided in the 1980s and early 1990s to try to resolve issues involving heritage places through the planning process or by voluntary agreements with the owners, rather than resorting to issuing orders under the *Heritage Act 1977*. In this situation the use of the Act declined, while more planning outcomes were achieved for conservation. Changes to the legislation in New South Wales have reflected this change in emphasis. In other cases, legislation has not been used because the governments involved have not been committed to conservation, and the results have reflected that lack of commitment.

Because there is more than one interpretation of the frequency of the use of an Act, it is difficult to correlate trends in the use of legislated powers with actual conservation outcomes, and indeed with commitment of government to heritage conservation objectives. It would be better to measure actual impacts on a State or Territory's heritage places, but as this report has conclusively shown, such monitoring has not yet been done. Appendix 6 shows the frequency of use of some of the primary historic heritage Acts, as reported by the agency responsible for their administration.

While Appendix 6 appears to provide a full picture, it is quite likely that activity under a number of Acts has only been partially reported. For example, a number of States have noted that they have not maintained accurate figures on the use of some legislated powers, and in other cases the agency has worked with owners and developers to achieve outcomes without having to resort to using the Act. But even allowing for this, there would appear to be a substantial amount of legislation that has never been used, although the significance of this is difficult to interpret. It may simply be that the existence of the legal requirement or penalty has been sufficient to ensure compliance. It may equally be that legislation is neither complied with nor policed, and breaches of the heritage provisions are occurring, are not being reported, and are not being prosecuted. One way of determining the effectiveness of legislation might be to extend the historic places survey, or carry out a separate survey, in a number of locations to see if legislative provisions have been adhered to, and if the outcome results in healthy heritage places.

The way legislation is now designed, most of the heritage issues are dealt with as planning matters. Heritage legislation is usually not brought into play until the planning processes, including appeals, have been worked through without resolving the issue, or a maverick action is taken by an owner. Hence, in the most populous State, New South Wales, there were 17 prosecutions during the reporting period. In Western Australia, where the heritage/planning system interaction is much more recent, 15 'stop work' orders were issued during the reporting period, while Queensland issued five.

Overall, the heritage legislation, in conjunction with the planning legislation, appears to be working adequately as an administrative mechanism in nearly all State and Territory jurisdictions. What is not being monitored (or at least reported) is the extent to which the planning system, to which many heritage decisions have been transferred, is actually working at the local level. No data was available for this report to make that judgement.

There is also insufficient information to assess whether the successful administration of the legislation results in an increase in the health of heritage places. It may be the case where a place is listed, and the process associated with that listing, ensures that its significance is taken into account when development approval is sought. However, there are major gaps. For example, significant houses *in their settings* are being lost because there is no overview of the presence of these places, and they are dealt with on an individual basis when development is considered. While the house may be retained, the setting rarely is. Intact interiors are being lost because they are not considered in local heritage surveys. Significant heritage landscapes are being slowly whittled away as individual developments are considered and there is no mechanism to protect the area as a whole or the mechanism in place does not achieve this.

Table 75 in the Human Settlements Theme Report illustrates the extent of local government heritage protection in Victoria and New South Wales.

The issue of heritage listings being done at the last minute, often following the proposal to develop a place, continues to create negative attitudes towards listing. Regional/Local Government Area/thematic surveys are essential if we are to address this. In addition, they provide contextual information for making decisions and help owners understand the significance of their property.

## Conclusions and implications regarding government protection of heritage places

The protection of heritage places by government through acquisition, improved management regimes and use of legislation has been mixed:

- It is generally acknowledged that, while the current Natural Heritage Trust program is a significant and substantial contribution towards improving the adequacy and representativeness of the reserve system, and protects some natural and Indigenous heritage places in the process, the current program is not sufficient to achieve the comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system across all environmental regions that is the agreed objective. The States and Territories have been slow to commit funding to the program.
- Governments have not been consistently committed to following through on initiatives. An example is the RFA process, where the National Estate listing of about 3000 places with demonstrated heritage value has been put on hold, and with the proposed closure of the Register of the National Estate they are likely never to be registered. While it can be argued that the places are protected anyway under the EPBC Act, the benefits of public recognition of the values and accessible information through the register may be lost.
- As there is no national program to monitor the physical condition of Australia's heritage places and objects, one result is that it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of government funding initiatives in terms of real conservation outcomes. Even in the case of purchases of reserve areas funded by the Natural Heritage Trust, governments can only report on dollars spent and hectares acquired, and not on actual improvement or deterioration in the condition of heritage values.
- Overall, the historic heritage legislation, in conjunction with the planning legislation, appears to be working adequately as an administrative mechanism in nearly all State and Territory jurisdictions. However, the extent to which the local planning system incorporates heritage conservation is not known.

## Government funding of heritage research and conservation

While work leading to the conservation of heritage places is funded by individuals and the private sector, a large proportion of funding—probably the majority—comes from governments. Governments fund their own management and conservation of reserves and government property, as well as providing for general heritage funding (such as the Commonwealth and State/Territory grants programs and the Natural Heritage Trust) for the conservation of heritage places.

It is difficult, given the different and often non-specific reporting formats for government funding, to consistently separate the funds provided specifically for maintaining heritage values from the overall funds provided to heritage and land-management agencies. Not all agencies report separately on conservation and protection programs, and it is difficult to be certain that, for example, field staffing levels are not, in part, resources to maintain values, or that interpretation programs do not fulfil the same role. Even in the case of special grant programs, the ratio of funds expended on direct conservation works to funds expended on administrative, research or infrastructure support is difficult to determine, and generally all these activities usually lead to a conservation outcome.

### Natural heritage places funding

The Natural Heritage Trust was the major funding initiative by the Commonwealth Government in the natural environmental field during the review period. The Natural Heritage Trust is a six-year program that commenced in 1996, utilising \$1.5 billion and focusing on five key environmental themes: land, vegetation, rivers, coasts and marine, and biodiversity. It provides funding for environmental activities at a community level, a regional level, a State/Territory level, and a national level.

The program addresses a range of agricultural and natural resource management issues through 20 separate funding programs, but it is not possible to easily determine how much of the \$280 million allocated through, for example, the Landcare program is actually expended in protecting or recovering assessed heritage values, as opposed to general environmental improvement. The same applies to other Natural Heritage Trust programs, such as weed and feral animal control, and land and water quality audits. The National Reserve System Program, which committed \$85 million in a series of cooperative programs aimed at developing the National Reserve System, was discussed earlier in this section.

The management of World Heritage properties has involved a substantial funding commitment. Table 23 records the level of Commonwealth funding provided between 1994–95 and 1999–2000. It shows fluctuating levels, with significantly increased funding for most properties but a substantial drop in funding for the Wet Tropics of Queensland (from over \$6 m to less than \$4 m). This drop is magnified if the cessation of the Daintree Rescue Program (operating within the Wet Tropics) is taken into account, as funding for this program is not represented at all in the 1999–2000 budget. However, it is impossible to analyse from the available information what the ‘normal’ level of funding would be, so the trend cannot be assessed as positive or negative.

In the reporting period management plans have been finalised for all World Heritage properties, including those with private property owners at Willandra Lakes and the Wet Tropics of Queensland. A strategic planning framework was prepared for the Central Eastern Rainforests Reserve which has 57 discrete areas within the inscribed property. A management plan will need to be prepared for the recently-listed Greater Blue Mountains Area.

Commonwealth–State management arrangements for the four properties (Lord Howe Island, Shark Bay, Fraser Island, and Australian Fossil Mammal Sites) listed as under negotiation in the 1996 State of Environment report have been finalised.

While it is difficult to estimate the total annual expenditure in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA), some of the main per annum components include:

- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority: \$20 million (total operating budget in 1997–98 related to the Great Barrier Reef including joint funding and the Queensland contribution).



**Table 23: Commonwealth World Heritage management funding, 1994–95 to 1999–2000.<sup>A</sup>**  
**[NCH Indicators G.5 and G.6 (World Heritage)]**

Property	1994–95	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000
Australian Fossil Mammal Sites	303 189	185 000	415 000	712 000	593 500	812 913
Central Eastern Rainforest Reserves	360 000	175 000	280 000	1 319 000	1 385 000	732 000
Fraser Island	300 700	317 150	700 000	950 000	70 000	662 500
Kakadu	9 907 260	8 204 614 <sup>B</sup>	7 080 080	7 229 856	13 638 539 <sup>C</sup>	10 595 882 <sup>C</sup>
Lord Howe Island	234 114	60 000	360 000	435 925	484 500	453 400
Shark Bay	210 000	169 000	491 630	674 480	534 350	490 250
Tasmanian Wilderness	5 101 000	5 177 000	5 260 000	7 350 000	7 005 000	5 770 000
Wet Tropics	6 195 000	4 060 000	4 689 000	5 376 000	3 446 000	3 752 500
Willandra Lakes	420 245	122 375	2 510 000	2 497 329	848 850	340 000
Uluru-Kata Tjuta	4 855 419	4 064 999 <sup>B</sup>	2 119 241	1 831 210	3 572 810 <sup>C</sup>	3 986 287 <sup>C</sup>
Total	27 886 927	22 535 138	23 904 951	28 375 800	31 579 049	27 696 732
One-off items <sup>D</sup>	4 068 000	5 428 000	3 584 000	4 500 000	100 000	16 650

<sup>A</sup> Includes funding from all Commonwealth sources (NHT, Bill 1 and Bill 2. Correct as at 30.9.2000.)

<sup>B</sup> Includes additional capital works for Cultural Centres.

<sup>C</sup> Includes additional capital works on visitor infrastructure because of Sydney Olympic Games.

<sup>D</sup> One-off funding items:

1994–95, Daintree Rescue Program (DRP) (\$4 068 000)

1995–96, DRP (\$4 428 000) and Willandra Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) (\$1 000 000)

1996–97, DRP (\$1 584 000) and Willandra SAP (\$2 000 000)

1997–98, DRP (\$1 500 000), Willandra SAP (\$2 000 000) and Dugong conservation (\$1 000 000)

1998–99, Cassowary recovery strategy (\$100 000)

1999–2000, NHT mid-term strategy (\$16 650).

Source: Australian and World Heritage Group, Environment Australia.

- Commonwealth Agencies: \$30 million (Australian Institute of Marine Science, Australian Marine Safety Authority, Coastwatch, Australian Quarantine Inspection Service, Department of Defence, etc.).
- Other funding for GBRWHA management comes from Queensland agencies (estimated to be \$14 million per year), the Reef Cooperative Research Centre and the private sector (e.g. industry).

### Indigenous heritage places funding

During the reporting period there appears to have been an increase in funding from a range of sources. However, it proved to be difficult to differentiate between funding for site works and research, and for other aspects of Indigenous heritage relating to the needs of Indigenous communities. There is an increasing reluctance of Indigenous communities to become involved in some areas of research, and probably a declining amount of pure archaeological research. This reflects the fact that approval for Indigenous heritage funding has become reliant in more recent years on the approval of representative communities, and that research projects now have to be supported by a custodial group to proceed, whereas in the past consultation was not as much an issue. On the other hand, some very innovative work with communities on community-directed archaeological work has been carried out during the reporting period. The work on land rights claims and Native Title has increased, with consequent holistic research into the use and existence of heritage places. This has increased our knowledge of Indigenous heritage places in the landscape.

Attitudes towards funding for research on Indigenous cultural heritage also vary across the Indigenous organisations surveyed. In some cases, Indigenous communities feel little need for research to be undertaken in their area. In these cases the organisations tend to seek funds for conservation or educational programs that relate to cultural heritage. Where communities do encourage research of a theoretical nature, they express a strong desire to maintain control over the process, as is shown by the increasing number of Indigenous organisations that are establishing protocols for this purpose.

**Table 24: Number and amount of funding for Indigenous cultural heritage projects.**  
 [NCH Indicators IA 1.1 and IA 1.2 (Number and Level of Funding for Indigenous Cultural Heritage/Archaeological Projects)]

Year	Region	95-96		96-97		97-98		98-99		99-2000		Total	
		No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$
AIATSIS (org)	National	8	127 748	2	33 704	4	59 252	1	10 933	8	140 210	23	371 847
AIATSIS (ind)	National	17	208 320	6	122 410	10	97 539	2	27 730	8	133 162	43	589 161
Australian Research Council	National	0	nd	0	nd	5	358 678	9	485 334	9	548 972	23	1 392 984
ATSIC (Nat)	National	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	1	42 898	1	42 898
ATSIC (Reg)		nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	5	95 457	1	31 300	6	126 757
EA – National Estate Grants Program (nat)	National	1	25 000	4	155 200	0	nd	6	238 256	0	nd	11	418 456
EA – National Estate Grants Program (state)	National	20	434 850	5	111 506	0	nd	0	nd	0	nd	25	546 356
EA – Community Heritage Protection Program	National	0	nd	0	nd	0	nd	0	nd	5	206 942	5	206 942
DISR – RTGP <sup>A</sup>	National	1	35 500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	35 500
Aboriginal Grants	ACT	0	nd	0	nd	0	nd	1	10 000	0	nd	1	10 000
Aboriginal grants <sup>B</sup>	NT	1	11 400	1	11 400	1	11 400	1	11 400	1	11 400	5	57 000
Dhimurru	NT	0	nd	1	12 000	0	nd	1	50 000	0	nd	2	62 000
Queensland Coastcare	Qld	1	11 000	2	32 600	1	31 100	3	46 134	0	nd	7	120 834
Queensland Community History Grants	Qld	0	nd	1	10 000	1	10 200	7	76 000	5	86 000	14	182 200
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>49</b>	<b>853 818</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>488 820</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>568 169</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>1 051 244</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1 200 884</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>4 162 935</b>

<sup>A</sup> \$4 042 471 was spent on Indigenous tourism projects by DISR (and its predecessors) from 1992-93 to 1999-2000, but only one project appears to have had an archaeological component.

<sup>B</sup> This is an average amount per year over the five-year period.

nd No data available.

Source: Australian Heritage Commission.

In other cases, communities see that an increasing knowledge of cultural heritage is crucial to their survival. Research can fulfil several purposes in these cases. It can be used in 'connection reports' for Native Title claims and other processes entered into for gaining control over land. The information gained from the research can also be used to educate the young and increase community cultural awareness. Another outcome can be the incorporation of the research findings into heritage tours or walks for tourists. In all these cases, encouraging academic involvement in research is a tool used by a community to strengthen the presentation of its identity, usually to the outside world.

Table 24 indicates the available information on funding, most of which represents Commonwealth activity. Few States responded with information on their funding programs. While this data is incomplete, it does illustrate inconsistent levels of funding through the reporting period which makes planning and skills retention difficult. A substantial increase in funding for Indigenous heritage research was provided in the year 1999-2000, following a substantial drop in the preceding three years from the 1995-96 level.

In 1999-2000, only 24% of the total budget of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies was spent on their research function, compared to 41% on their archives, production and library functions. This figure for research is inflated by the inclusion of the grants program. If this is taken out, and only research carried out by Institute staff themselves is taken into account, the proportion of the total budget spent is only 16%. Table 24 also shows that the source of the largest funds was the Australian Research Grants to universities; and that the previous level of National Estate Grants Program funds has not been maintained by the replacement Community Heritage Protection Program. However, the

**Table 25: Major Commonwealth Government cultural heritage funding programs 1996–2000.**  
[NCH indicators G.5 and G.6 (Commonwealth)]

Program	Recipients (1996–2000) (\$)				
	Private owner	Community/ NGO	Local Government	State Government agencies	Commonwealth Government agencies
Federation Fund <sup>A</sup>	nil	28 089 000	9 111 000	15 000 000	46 000 000
Cultural Heritage Projects Program <sup>B</sup>	942 103	1 679 610	634 385	260 000	na
National Estate Grants Program <sup>C</sup>	na	5 231 617	1 641 244	2 341 634	55 487
Tax Incentives for Heritage Conservation <sup>D</sup>	9 500 000	na	na	na	na
Heritage Properties Restoration Program <sup>E</sup>	na	na	na	7 100 000	na
Grants in Aid to National Trust <sup>F</sup>	na	3 973 000	na	na	na
Voluntary Cultural Heritage Organisations <sup>F</sup>	na	479 000	na	na	na
Commemoration of Historic Events Famous People	na	252 485	15 480	5 175	8 058
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10 442 103</b>	<b>\$39 704 712</b>	<b>\$11 402 109</b>	<b>\$24 706 809</b>	<b>\$46 063 545</b>

<sup>A</sup> This program was a one-off budget commitment in 1998–99.

<sup>B</sup> This program commenced operation in 1999–2000, replacing the National Estate Grants Program.

<sup>C</sup> This program funded only one third historic projects.

<sup>D</sup> This program ceased in 2000.

<sup>E</sup> This program transferred from DCITA ceased in 1999–2000.

<sup>F</sup> The assistance provided under these two programs was not directly for maintaining heritage values, but rather to support community-based not-for-profit organisations in their efforts to do this.

na Not applicable.

Source: Historic Environment Section, Australian Heritage Commission.

Natural Heritage Trust allocated \$6 million to the Indigenous Protected Area Program from its \$1.5 billion program.

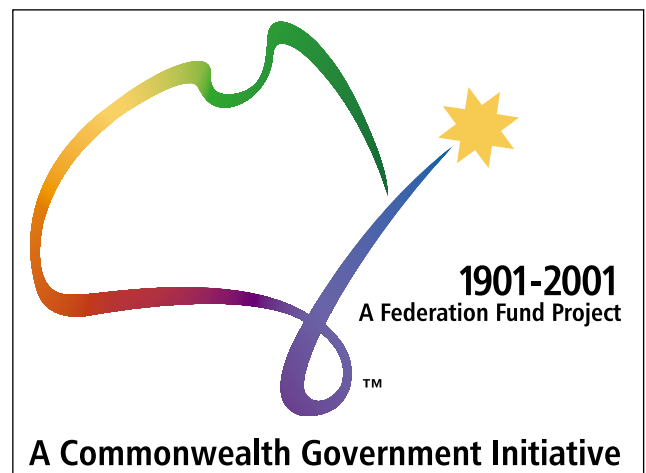
Where cultural heritage funding is sought by Indigenous organisations through the Natural Heritage Trust, it is for 'conservation protection or educative works' that relate to cultural heritage sites, rather than for more academic research. The funding is for fencing-off sites, rehabilitation of habitat, developing heritage trails or interpretative panels, or housing cultural heritage material. This means that the funding from the Natural Heritage Trust for Indigenous projects does not appear in Table 24.

### Historic heritage places funding

During the reporting period, the Commonwealth provided over \$132 million for programs which in whole or part were aimed at historic heritage place conservation (although some programs, such as the National Estate Grants Program, also included substantial natural and Indigenous heritage funding). This is outlined in Table 25.

By far the largest of these funding programs, the Centenary of Federation Fund (74% of the total expenditure) was a one-off budget allocation, and only a proportion of the funding was for direct heritage conservation because the Fund included substantial infrastructure and public presentation development funding. Much Centenary of Federation funding was for museum development, including the construction of the National Museum of Australia on Acton Peninsula in Canberra.

The National Estate Grants Program (NEGP), which had for over two decades been the primary Commonwealth heritage funding program, was wound down from its last full year of operation in 1995–96, before the replacement Cultural Heritage Projects Program commenced in 2000. The State/Territory component of the National Estate Grants Program was not replaced in the new Cultural Heritage Projects Program. In the intervening three years a substantial gap was left in funding opportunities for heritage studies and conservation. Another consequence of the loss of the National Estate Grants Program was the subsequent lack of funding for local and community projects, for thematic studies, and for studies relating to planning policy





The new National Museum of Australia in Canberra, ACT, was created around the themes of land, people and nation.

Source: George Serras/National Museum of Australia (2001).

development and general assistance (e.g. heritage advisers). Government policy under the new scheme has been that funding should go to places of national importance and should be focused on 'bricks and mortar'. This approach is likely to lead to a substantial gap in the funding for local heritage places and for historic heritage research and planning.

When the amount of funding in relation to both Indigenous and historic heritage places is compared to that provided for the natural environment through the Natural Heritage Trust, it would suggest reluctance on the part of the Commonwealth to pursue a leadership role in the cultural heritage area.

Historic shipwreck funding is provided jointly by the Commonwealth and the States and Territories. Table 26 indicates the level of funding for shipwrecks.



Naval Brigade Stores, Kangaroo Point, Brisbane, Qld.

Two stores were built in 1886–87 for the Queensland colonial navy and were taken over by the Commonwealth after Federation. One stores building burnt down and the surviving store was recently restored with Centenary of Federation funding.

Source: Mike Pearson (2000).

**Table 26: Funding (\$) provided for the protection and management of historic shipwrecks, 1995–2000.**  
[NCH indicators G.5 and G.6 (Shipwrecks)]

	Commonwealth funding	State/Territory funding	Total
NSW	305 753	855 839	1 161 592
Qld	270 003	3 740 600 <sup>A</sup>	4 010 603
WA	293 710	1 445 037	1 738 747
Vic.	323 971	938 000	1 261 971
SA	245 480	500 000	745 480
Tas.	246 800	208 000	454 800
NT	218 329	NA	218 329
Norfolk Island	16 200	0	16 200
AIMA <sup>B</sup>	66 850	NA	66 850
Commonwealth	51 436	NA	51 436
Totals	2 038 532	7 697 476	9 726 008

<sup>A</sup> Queensland figures were inflated because of the specific Pandora Foundation funds for the new Museum of Tropical Queensland in Townsville.

<sup>B</sup> Australian Institute for Maritime Archaeology.  
NA Not available.

Source: Historic Environment Section, Australian Heritage Commission.

As a category of heritage place, historic shipwrecks were well resourced in comparison with Indigenous sites over the reporting period.

### Funding programs in the States and Territories vary considerably in size

The States and Territories allocate funds for historic heritage place conservation. This is outlined in Table 27.

In New South Wales, a Heritage Assistance Program (HAP) and a new 'Heritage 2001' program are supported by interest on funds invested in the Heritage Conservation Fund. While this provides a constant source of funding, the level of funding is clearly dependent on interest levels which, in recent times, have been low. In 1997 an additional fund, the \$30 million program, was added to the existing Heritage Assistance Program. The objective of the new program is to support the conservation of major heritage items listed on the State



**Newcastle NSW Convict Lumber Yard Archaeological Site of the 1814–50 convict establishment.**

This site was excavated and building outlines marked with metal structures. It is an additional tourism attraction in this regional town. The Customs House is in the background.

Source: Mike Pearson (2000).

Table 27: State and Territory heritage funding (\$), 1995–2000<sup>A</sup>. [NCH indicator G.5 and G.6 (States and Territories)]

	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	Total 1995–2000
<b>NSW Heritage Office</b>						
Grants program	2 200 000	337 000	1 710 000	3 494 000	3 544 000	11 285 000
<b>Queensland EPA</b>						
Heritage grants	220 000	143 000	180 046	168 711		711 757
Community history grants	41 478	25 650	31 020	30 000		128 148
Indigenous community grants		195 785	231 215	308 076		735 076
Heritage Trails <sup>B</sup>					110 000 000	110 000 000
<b>SA Dept of Environment and Heritage</b>						
State heritage fund	243 000	365 000	552 000	497 000	582 000	2 239 000
SA History Trust Museums program	100 000	100 000	100 000	100 000		400 000
<b>ACT Heritage</b>						
Overall funding				983 000	1 250 000	2 233 000
Grants					183 000	183 000
<b>Parks Victoria</b>						
Heritage conservation	97 000	58 000	133 000	178 000	94 000	560 000
Heritage labour and costs (est.)		3 400 000	3 600 000	3 700 000	4 000 000	14 700 000
<b>Heritage Victoria</b>						
Assistance				384 160		384 160
Local government heritage studies			200 000	545 000		745 000
Local Government heritage advisors			177 000	240 000		417 000
<b>Heritage Council WA</b>						
Conservation incentive		51 012	105 000			156 012
Heritage grants			1 000 000	950 000	858 000	2 808 000
Cossack Fund			56 800		94 000	150 800
Dalgety House			3 000	10 000	73 000	86 000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2 901 478</b>	<b>4 675 447</b>	<b>8 079 081</b>	<b>11 587 947</b>	<b>120 678 000</b>	<b>147 921 953</b>

<sup>A</sup> Blanks indicate the absence of information, not the absence of funding.

<sup>B</sup> A \$110 million program, provided 50/50 by Commonwealth and Queensland, commencing in 2000 for three years for 32 nominated projects.

Source: Historic Environment Section, Australian Heritage Commission.

**Heritage Register.** In 1999 a new Heritage Incentive Fund was created by amendments to the *Heritage Act 1977* to provide assistance in the form of the payment of land tax, duty or council rates for the owners of heritage items that are the subject of heritage agreements with the Minister. No money has yet been paid into this fund.

In Tasmania, the *Tasmanian Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995* provides for a heritage trust fund to be used exclusively for conservation funding. In February 2000 the fund received its first allocation of funds (amount not stated). A grants program is currently in operation.

In Victoria the establishment of a \$5 million annual Public Heritage Fund in 1999 provided a substantial boost to the ability of state and local government agencies to undertake economically valuable heritage conservation works.

In Western Australia during the last five years, the operating funds and human resources of the Heritage Council have remained virtually static. Since 1994 the Western Australian Lotteries Commission has allocated approximately \$1 million annually to a heritage funding program to places of community value.

In South Australia there has been no significant change in state funding other than a one-off injection of \$300 000 into the State Heritage Fund and access to capital works funding for heritage properties owned by the Department of Environment and Heritage. However the loss of the state component of the National Estate Grants Program had a major impact on both state and voluntary organisations and put a greater burden on the State Heritage Fund's grants program for private citizens.

### Incentives for private owners, including non-tax paying entities

The importance of heritage advisors to local heritage conservation has been recognised by their spread across local government areas as shown in Table 30, and their role in educating private owners of heritage. The importance of incentives in changing public opinion or owner attitudes to heritage listing has not been studied for this report. It needs to be raised when looking at the condition of churches for example. The effectiveness of a heritage fund, such as that in New South Wales, or funds that can be accessed at low interest rates and added to through tax-deductible donations, should be examined for the next reporting period.

### Conclusion and implications regarding heritage funding for research and conservation

- Funding for heritage research and conservation varied across Commonwealth and State governments.
- There is as yet no adequate, effective and strategic Commonwealth funding program to address the range of important issues facing the identification and conservation of heritage places. While Indigenous places have benefited in part from the Centenary of Federation and Natural Heritage Trust funding programs during the reporting period, there is no dedicated program in the Indigenous area to match the levels of these initiatives.
- The actual funding going to historic heritage places from the various Commonwealth programs is hard to determine, as the largest program during the period, the Centenary of Federation Fund, went to a large range of projects, only some of which were related to heritage places. A noticeable trend, however, has been to fund works rather than research, when a balance of the two is required.
- The States and Territories have steadily increased their funding of historic heritage places during the review period.

### Government rationalisation and organisational change

Government rationalisation programs are having a significant effect on heritage assets—railways, post offices, defence properties, hospitals, education facilities, fire stations, court houses, health centres and other identified and potential heritage places across Australia—through having their uses changed, or being sold by governments.

In part, governments are responding to (and sometimes driving) changes in technology, due in part to changing perceptions of economic viability of government services, and in part to changing concepts about the proper role of government. At the local government level, council area amalgamations, orchestrated by State governments which control the mechanisms of local government, have left many council facilities redundant. In affluent areas these may be used for other council functions, or sold for other uses; but in more depressed areas buildings can be left vacant and deteriorating, or demolished.

At the State, Territory and Commonwealth level, the changes have affected infrastructure such as railways, and heritage buildings previously used by government agencies. The most controversial of these, on a national level, has been the changes in postal services, which has seen the retail functions moved to smaller, more cost-effective premises and bulk mail handling moved to industrial areas, leaving many heritage post office buildings without an ongoing postal use. The Commonwealth has also disposed of a large number of lighthouses during the reporting period, mainly to state government agencies. Other major changes have occurred in the use of customs houses, court houses and defence properties, among others, leaving many heritage properties either vacant or converted to other uses.

Questions have been raised by the public and by government inquiries as to whether governments have taken sufficient action to ensure the protection of heritage values and minimisation of adverse impacts in this process. A number of States have responded by legislating for better identification of the heritage places owned by government agencies, and

## The changing rural infrastructure of the wheat belt in Western Australia

The rationalisation of the government railway infrastructure throughout rural Western Australia is having a serious effect on the heritage of the wheat belt area.

The railways were developed from the early 1900s in association with the government policies to open up agricultural land. Towns and communities were established around the railway sidings. Most of the lines closed to passengers during the 1950s and are now open only during the grain-harvesting season, if indeed there is still a line. Vacant and often derelict railway stations are often the only reminder of the railway presence. There are a handful of water tanks and some goods sheds left, but very little other infrastructure such as turntables. Some local government authorities have leased railway stations from Westrail (the State Government railway organisation), but recent changes in government policy has resulted in Westrail requiring local councils to take over maintenance responsibilities for the railway station (and other associated elements), which may otherwise be demolished.

Although there is also a government policy that places built prior to 1940 undergo heritage assessment before government disposal, some railway places are post-1940, and others are overlooked. Local communities and local government authorities are short of funds at the best of times and often do not have the capacity to take over derelict buildings that have been neglected for many years,

nor to conserve a water tower, for example, that no longer has a useful function.

The major banks are also making a mass exodus from regional Western Australia (a situation which is occurring throughout Australia) and leaving a string of vacant buildings, due to the general decline in population in many of the smaller inland rural towns. This means a reduction of available services and inevitably empty shops in the main streets, which in turn threatens public facilities such as the community town halls.

Funding is more available and local councils more inclined to contribute to large multipurpose recreational centres, usually located on the fringes of the towns to the detriment of the town's layout and sense of activity. Then, the centrally located town halls fall into disrepair, as they are used only a few times a year and then become a liability, as councils are reluctant to spend money on maintenance or conservation.

The more remote rural halls which may be more authentic (due to lack of change and lack of funds over the years) are at more risk, as they are much less liable to attract council support for maintenance as rural communities are reducing and dispersing. Once building and health surveyors declare them unsafe and a public liability due to lack of maintenance, the next step is demolition.... These halls are disappearing all over Australia.

Source: Burke (2000).

bringing them under tighter planning control. The Commonwealth has been slow in taking such action, despite the recommendations of the Committee of Review into Commonwealth Owned Heritage Property (Schofield 1996). However, a Commonwealth Heritage List of government-owned heritage places is included in the Environment and Heritage Legislation Amendment Bill tabled in Parliament in December 2000, which includes requirements for protecting heritage values.

The importance of heritage to tourism has been recognised by governments because of the economic benefits, but as a community we seem unable to provide funds to heritage for educational purposes for our long-term social well-being. Cultural heritage responsibilities tend to be placed in the environment portfolio, even though heritage is relevant to environment, tourism, planning and infrastructure, education, and (in the case of museums and moveable heritage) the arts. Cross-portfolio funding is required to produce benefits in each of these areas.

### Commonwealth disposals

'... it has been the disposal of many Commonwealth heritage properties that has engendered the greatest feelings of confusion, anger and loss in local communities which feel powerless to influence decisions that impact directly on the social structure of their towns and cities.'

—Schofield (1996, p. 62)

The most vocal community response has probably been to the disposal of post offices and lighthouses, because these are prominent buildings in towns or in the regional landscape, and many of them have been affected.

While there appear to be no reliable figures for the rate of disposal in the period 1990–1995, the Coordination Council on the release of Commonwealth land identified that

of the 292 places scheduled for disposal between 1994 and 1999, 44 were on the Register of the National Estate. Table 28 shows the number of properties reported as divested by Australia Post, the Defence Housing Authority, Department of Defence, Department of Finance, CSIRO, and Australian Maritime Safety Authority. Some 106 Commonwealth places in the Register of the National Estate were reported as actually disposed of by Australia Post and the Defence Housing Authority, which is double the 1994 projection. It is not known whether this increase was due to more of the 292 places scheduled for disposal being assessed as being of heritage value (such as the 65 places proposed for disposal by the Maritime Safety Authority, including many lighthouses), or due to an increase in the overall projected number that resulted from the inclusion of registered places. About 40% of the divested places were in NSW.

**Table 28:** Number of Commonwealth Government heritage properties divested, 1996–2000.

Year	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	Total
Number	36	51	48	26	10	171

Source: Historic Environment Section, Australian Heritage Commission.

**Table 29:** Number of Commonwealth Government heritage properties divested but leased back during each year.

Year	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	Total
Number	10	17	3	8	2	40

Source: Historic Environment Section, Australian Heritage Commission.

Despite the apparent asset sales, 24% of disposed places were leased back (see Table 29), and one can assume that their heritage values were retained. The survey of historic places undertaken in 2000 identified a number of former Commonwealth and State or Territory heritage buildings that were vacant or under-used and in deteriorating condition, suggesting that protective mechanisms were not working adequately in at least some cases. It is also of interest that the New South Wales Audit Office examined the effectiveness of long-term leasing versus ownership for the housing of agencies involved with the delivery of core government activities. While acknowledging that the question of ownership versus leasing can be complex, studies indicated that it is generally more cost-effective to own accommodation than to enter long-term leases (NSW Parliament 1997, p.2).

The disposal process also affects natural and Indigenous heritage places. Where larger properties such as defence lands are being relinquished, natural and Indigenous values often have not been identified, and disposal occurs without the necessary protection.

In some disposal cases cultural heritage values are not given primacy. In the case of a number of lighthouse disposals, for example, the State land-management agencies have been keen to acquire the properties not primarily because of a desire to conserve the historic lighthouse, but rather to ensure that the surrounding natural environment in the lighthouse reserve remained in public hands, many of them being adjacent to or surrounded by national parks, as in Victoria.

### Changes in government organisation

‘Government organisation’ in this context includes the way in which each jurisdiction perceives and administers its own heritage identification and protection regime, as well as the relationship between jurisdictions. The expectations of the relative roles of government at the local, State or Territory and Commonwealth level changes over time, and major shifts in the relationship between the three levels over the last decade have resulted in legislative and administrative changes during the review period.

There has been a steady shift of day-to-day responsibility for development planning, including heritage control, from State governments to local governments. This has resulted in an increased emphasis during the reporting period in the funding of local government heritage survey work (notably in Victoria), and the provision of local heritage advisory services nationally, as shown in Table 30. However, as indicated earlier, there is a substantial time-lag in the ability of local governments to adopt the heritage component of their increasing responsibilities. As a result, there is a disjunction between the theory of clean division of responsibilities—between Commonwealth, State and local governments—and the reality.

Table 30: State and Territory heritage advisory services, May 1999.

State/Territory	Heritage Advisory Service	Date started	Number of Council areas served by advisors
ACT	nil		
NSW	yes	1983	93
NT	yes	1994	2 (Top End, Alice Springs)
Qld	yes	1992	6
SA	yes	1987	15
Tas.	nil		3
Vic.	yes	1977	44
WA	yes	1992	6
Total			152

Source: Historic Environment Section, Australian Heritage Commission.

In particular, local government is often not able to fund, as a priority, the heritage surveys necessary to prepare local heritage schemes. Some States have recognised this problem, and have tried to address it with targeted funding, but there is still a nation-wide challenge in resourcing local government to be able to undertake quality heritage studies and to implement well-founded local heritage management regimes.

This is taking place in an environment of generally declining public sector agency budgets for heritage place maintenance and restoration (with the exception of Victoria and New South Wales, which have put substantial resources into the area). The Commonwealth ceased its tax incentive scheme for private heritage property owners during the review period, and the scope of its heritage-related funding has been narrowed considerably, with cross-State and national research to establish context for heritage assessment and conservation being largely abandoned. This constriction of funding at the national level has to be compared with the largesse of Natural Heritage Trust funds for natural heritage and environmental protection and biodiversity conservation. The support of tourism infrastructure is receiving higher levels of funding than is conservation of the heritage places that the tourists come to see.

The new Commonwealth heritage regime, reported on elsewhere in this report, is based in part on an assumption outlined in the introduction of the new heritage Bills in Parliament (as of December 2000) that each level of government is equally capable of taking on the responsibilities for identifying and conserving the natural and cultural heritage resource in its control. Performance over the period 1995–2000 demonstrates that this assumption does not stand up to close inspection. In terms of State of Environment reporting, there are substantial differences in the capacity of the three levels of government to report on the identification and condition of heritage places.

In the historic heritage field, the most useful heritage database for state of environment reporting, on the continental scale, has been the Register of the National Estate. Some of the State and Territory registers are at least as good for their jurisdiction, but major differences in the capacities of the supporting databases meant that it was not possible to aggregate the State data to give a national overview. The local government inventory information was broader in the number of places it identified, and except in NSW this data was not accessible as a single database.

In the context of the current experience, a major problem exists in the heritage regime proposed by the Commonwealth, which consists of a national list reflecting Commonwealth responsibilities, State and Territory registers representing State-level responsibilities, and Local Government registers picking up local heritage significance. The current Bills have no role for the Register of the National Estate other than to freeze its operation but would include its data in the Australian Heritage Places Inventory (AHPI, see <http://www.heritage.gov.au/ahpi/index.html>) which will simply become a national reporting mechanism for State registers. The State/Territory registers are constrained in most cases to listing historic heritage places that reach a significance threshold of 'State' significance. The existing State and Territory registers, with a few exceptions, do not have the breadth of the Register of the National Estate in covering natural, Indigenous and historic heritage. Indigenous heritage places are now mainly recorded and protected by operation of State and Territory legislation, albeit largely separate to the broad heritage-type legislation. In the meantime there is a very real risk of

disfranchising large parts of Australia in terms of their access to historic heritage recognition and possibly funding, and placing substantial numbers of heritage places at increased risk.

The problem lies in the fact that the two 'top' tiers of this regime—the national list and the State and Territory registers—are in general based on thresholds that would be reached only by places with national or State significance. The remaining places, being of local significance, would be the responsibility of local governments. However, most rural local governments do not have the resources to carry out adequate systematic surveys of heritage at the local level, and to maintain that information in a useable form if it is gathered. A more basic (and in some senses linked) problem is that there is neither the experience, nor in many cases the will, to embrace heritage issues at the local government level. Many local governments are hard-pressed to maintain roads, sewerage and garbage systems, before they can consider funding a perceived 'luxury' such as heritage identification and protection.

While the provision of heritage advisory services in many local government areas (initiated with National Estate Grants Program funds) has been successful, only a minority of local government areas have heritage registers, except in Victoria where all but two of the local government authorities have heritage planning overlays now in their planning schemes. In addition, many of the studies that have been completed in some States are of poor quality, and are by no means an adequate survey of the area's heritage places. In many cases heritage studies do not include Indigenous places or natural heritage places. This lack of local studies and their variability in quality and comprehensiveness is not likely to be solved in the foreseeable future, given that even those States that have 'required' them for many years have completed relatively few.

The Register of the National Estate fills an important gap in providing local communities with an opportunity to have their heritage places recognised in the absence of adequate local government registers, and where the place is not sufficiently significant to meet State listing thresholds. This role is even now being reduced by agreements between the States and the Australian Heritage Commission over heritage assessment processes, and by priority-setting for the processing of outstanding nominations. The role of the Register would be removed altogether if the Australian Heritage Places Inventory was reduced to being simply a mirror of the State and Territory registers.

### Providing the skills to achieve heritage protection

Training of heritage place and object managers and their staff is an important issue to consider when assessing the condition of Australia's heritage and the provision of government funding for such training. For some aspects of management, complex technical knowledge is required so that treatments applied in the conservation management and protection process do not damage the place or object. Well-known controversies have occurred regarding the restoration of paintings and the degree of renewal of historic fabric in building conservation, and there are many cases of well-intentioned people and unskilled working bees attempting to restore heritage objects and places, with disastrous consequences for long-term conservation.

The data available for reporting on this issue are patchy and inadequate. The discussion below focuses on a few issues where data are available, and provides a snapshot (albeit a constrained one) of the availability of practitioners and the supply of training opportunities.

Table 31 summarises the availability of practitioners in the historic environment field in a number of organisations and in government in general. There would seem to be a roughly steady membership in each category, in a situation where the demand is growing.

The University of Canberra provides one example of the output of heritage practitioners. In the five-year period 1995–1999, 105 degrees in conservation fields (Indigenous and historic places management, materials conservation and museums management) were completed, but the annual rate of graduates fluctuated from a low of 12 to a high of 38. This fluctuation and general number of graduates has been roughly the same since the early 1980s.

In 2000 there were 104 environmental management courses offering heritage management training by Universities and TAFEs around Australia, and 79 of these were degree courses. (Source: <http://www.ea.gov.au/epg/envirnet/education/courses.htm>). At a glance, then, it would appear that the number of training courses is adequate. The content of courses being offered has not been analysed. The section 'Indigenous control of Indigenous heritage' (page 110) discusses the training of Indigenous professionals in more detail.

**Table 31: Membership of professional historic heritage organisations, 1999–2000. [NCH Indicator G.7]**

Organisation	Number of members
AICCM <sup>A</sup>	486
Australia ICOMOS <sup>B</sup>	374
AusHeritage <sup>C</sup>	39
Professional Historians Association (NSW) <sup>D</sup>	59
Government employees <sup>E</sup>	73

<sup>A</sup> The Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM) is the peak organisation for materials conservators nationally, but anyone can be a member.

<sup>B</sup> Australia ICOMOS is the peak organisation for cultural heritage practitioners, especially in the historic heritage field. Membership requires professional qualifications or expertise in the heritage field.

<sup>C</sup> AusHeritage is an organisation of professionals in the cultural heritage and museums management and materials conservation fields, promoting and networking Australians working internationally.

<sup>D</sup> The Professional Historians Association (NSW) represents professional historians working in all fields, including heritage.

<sup>E</sup> The number of government professional employees is difficult to estimate at any given time, due to definition problems (e.g. who is working in 'heritage?'), and ongoing turn-over of staff. Some States have not provided information.

Source: Historic Environment Section, Australian Heritage Commission.

### Conclusion and implications regarding government rationalisation, organisational changes and provision of skills

- Governments have continued to implement rationalisation programs involving their services and property portfolios.
- Commonwealth heritage properties are being disposed of at an unrecorded rate. In the absence of action by the Commonwealth government to ensure adequate identification of heritage places under its stewardship, many places have been disposed of with no survey to assess potential heritage values, be they natural, Indigenous or historic. Without this knowledge, the Commonwealth cannot know if its disposal program has resulted in the loss of heritage places.
- There have been inadequate safeguards applied to ensure that disposal programs do not damage heritage places. The Commonwealth has still not fully addressed the recommendations of its Committee of Review (Scholfield 1996).
- Changes being implemented by the States and Commonwealth governments in firmly defining which level of government—Commonwealth, State and Territory or local—is responsible for different heritage issues, is proceeding in advance of adequate safeguards. Local government in particular is being given increasing responsibilities without corresponding funding.
- Despite the number of courses currently available and the increasing number of graduates in a range of disciplines necessary for heritage conservation, there is no data available for assessing whether these meet the needs of heritage conservation managers in the natural, historic or Indigenous fields.