

Natural and cultural heritage

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Links to data:

In the following text, there are hyperlinks to indicator documents which informed the particular statement or comment to which they are linked. It should be noted that, at different points in the commentary, different words might trigger links to the same indicator document. The links are entirely context dependent. In some cases, hyperlinks are made to indicator documents which are now populated but for which data were unavailable to the commentary authors at the time of writing the commentaries.

Introduction

Australia's heritage—the surrounding landscape layered with places and associated objects—tells the story of who we are, what we have done in Australia, and our relationship to the environment. We have shaped that landscape and it has shaped us and how we have lived, and formed our cultural identity. To Indigenous Australians, the environment itself is a cultural artefact, having been created by ancestral beings; Indigenous story and ceremony in 'language', the Dreaming, maintains the country and a group's identity with that country. To other Australians, natural heritage places are landscapes of value.

Awareness of and attachment to this heritage motivate Australians to protect, conserve and celebrate it. Pressures on this heritage result from inadequate understanding, lack of legislation and protection programmes, lack of skills and resources, and developments that impinge on its integrity. Understanding these pressures enables Australians to respond with improved programmes for heritage conservation.

The 1996 State of Environment Report (*SoE1996*) outlined generic pressures on heritage places and objects, the state of these, and responses to conserve them. The 2001 report was a pioneering effort to test the 43 indicators that were devised in 1998 as a means of providing data about the condition of Australia's historic, Indigenous and natural heritage places and collections (Lennon et al. 2001). In this 2006 assessment, the range of heritage issues encompassed in the previous reports has been collapsed into 25 broader indicators that relate to knowledge, condition, response, skills and community awareness (see Appendix 1).

Data on which to base this report has been gathered in part by the Department of Environment and Heritage and provided through an online Data Reporting System. This commentary draws out the issues and responses, including in particular landscapes and regions. Other state of the environment themes relate to heritage; for example, there are links between Human settlements and heritage places, and Biodiversity is particularly relevant to natural heritage and landscapes, as Coasts and Oceans are for underwater heritage and marine reserves such as the Great Barrier Reef or Monkey Mia.

Context

Thirty years ago, the *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1974* ushered in the first nation-wide heritage identification and assessment programme. Now there has been a quantum leap with the 2003 amendments to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), which broadens the definition of 'environment' to embrace the heritage values of places. These values include 'the places' natural and cultural environment having aesthetic, historic, scientific or social significance, or other significance, for current and future generations of Australians' [section 528, (47)]. The Act also defines Indigenous heritage value as 'a heritage value of the place that is of significance to indigenous persons in accordance with their practices, observances, customs, traditions, beliefs or history' [section 528 (48)].

Indigenous people have always maintained the totality of environment—the indivisibility of earth–land–sea–sky, and that the whole landscape is sentient, a living being nourishing their lives. This nation-wide belief is now enshrined in the Australian legal definition of environment. The legislative amendments have created new formal consultation mechanisms through the Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC), comprised of Commonwealth, state and territory ministers, who agreed to a heritage protocol for developing policies and programmes on nation-wide issues.

Despite this far-reaching legal and philosophical advance, the relationship between community awareness and heritage conservation, as reported regularly in the media, remains locked in clichéd time warps and simplistic single-issue causes. Such a cause might be the campaign to save an historic building in the face of demolition or urban redevelopment; yet its heritage values should have been identified long before, and options canvassed for its conservation—a proactive approach rather than the inevitable, and usually lost, last-minute

campaign when development application consents have been granted legally and the results highlight the failure of process.

Heritage places enhance the social capital of local communities by providing a tangible link to the past and reinforcing the sense of community identity, which in turn contributes to social cohesion within the community. The ABS Social Capital Framework lists significant features of culture (language, history, shared beliefs) and a range of legal, political and institutional conditions that are relevant to the Australian context (ABS 2004b, p. 14). The vast majority of heritage places are owned privately and social capital is built up by conservation performing the essential social function of sustaining heritage, while the consumption or use of heritage is usually a shared social experience.

In the five years since the last State of Environment report, which came at the time of the nation's one-hundredth birthday, there has been a disengagement from social issues like heritage conservation, with attention turning to individual concerns. In March 2005, social commentator Hugh Mackay (2005) said that 'the nation felt that it was coping with too much change too quickly at the end of the twentieth century with big agenda items like the Republic, Reconciliation, foreign investment in Australian property, then came terrorism. People want to control what is on their horizon so there has been a concentration on the backyard, renovation, share portfolios and retirement planning and a return to fundamentals'. He argued there is no escaping the 'real cultural revolution' that has occurred in Australia over the past 30 years. It is manifested in changed gender roles with women's participation in all walks of life: in a radically transformed economic structure where there is the largest gap ever in household incomes and underemployment is the dark shadow; in an information technology revolution that is equivalent in impact to the industrial revolution; and in national identity, where, after 30 years, Australia is regarded as a successful multicultural society. In 2004, 20 per cent of Australian households had an average income of \$12 000 and 20 per cent had an average of \$180 000 (Mackay 2005). The current birth rate is the lowest ever, at 1.7 babies per woman, resulting in the smallest generation. Some 25 per cent of households are now single person households (Mackay 2005).

It is against this social backdrop that we have to consider trends in heritage conservation about knowledge of the resource, its physical condition and integrity, responses to conserve it, skills available for this task and community attitudes.

Knowledge of heritage

All states and territories now have heritage listing in their statutory planning systems. As reported in 2001, some only cover historic heritage (Queensland, Tasmania, Western Australia) and there is separate legislation for protection of Indigenous heritage. Some jurisdictions include natural heritage under heritage legislation (for example, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory), while others rely on nature conservation or

vegetation protection ordinances. Natural heritage listings have revolved around significant trees, geoheritage sites, and the expanding cultural landscape designations.

The lack of consistency in heritage recording makes uniform reporting very difficult. This has been recognised for many years but the problem remains. It is impossible to have an overview of the knowledge of heritage places across Australia without using imprecise and surrogate data.

At the end of 2000, there were 13 101 places entered in the Register of the National Estate, 75 per cent of which were historic places; New South Wales dominated with nearly one-third of all places. From 2001 to 2004, only 342 places were added to the Register of the National Estate, reflecting the slow-down in consultation procedures, dealing with the existing backlog of nominations, revision of citations, and much of the listing activity being undertaken in the states and territories as part of their expanding land use planning regimes.

Knowledge comes from disseminating findings of studies identifying heritage values in places and objects. In 2001, the Australian Heritage Commission published *Australian Historic Themes*, a framework for use in heritage assessments and management, and in 2001 it launched a series of research projects: *Creating an Australian Democracy*, *Transport and Communications*, *Australians at War* and *Inspirational Landscapes*. Chinese heritage in Australia was a priority, with the launch in all states and territories of *Tracking the Dragon, a guide for finding and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places* in 2002 and the establishment of state committees to follow up on nominations of such places to ensure their protection. Other completed thematic studies that were published in 2002 were: *Women's Employment and Professionalism in Australia: Histories, Themes and Places* (Nugent 2002); *Urban Heritage: The Rise and Postwar Development of Australian Capital City Centres* (Marsden 2000), and *Mining Heritage Places: Assessment Manual* (Pearson and McGowan 2000). These studies were circulated to state agencies and universities teaching cultural heritage courses; their impact can be seen in the number of nominations to heritage registers of places related to these themes. Despite this effort, they have not led to strategies for following through with listings at all levels of protection.

In 2002 *Ask First: A guide to respecting Indigenous places and values* (Australian Heritage Commission 2002) was published by the Australian Heritage Commission and in 2003 a second edition of *Protecting Natural Heritage*, a guide to using the Australian Natural Heritage Charter, was published (Australian Heritage Commission 2003b). Scoping studies of Indigenous places, using promulgated frameworks, instead of the earlier Australian Heritage Commission site type 'profiles', have been undertaken to provide a comparative framework for the following:

- Aboriginal missions and reserves
- Aboriginal rock art
- massacre and struggle sites

- important Indigenous people
- prehistoric way of life
- earliest evidence of Aboriginal people
- Indigenous fish traps
- burial sites
- arrival of new people.

These studies also assess the level of significance of places. Indigenous heritage in Australian Government Defence properties has also been identified in consultation with Indigenous communities for Buckland, Shoalwater Bay, Bradshaw and Williamstown military training properties. An outcome of such studies is enhanced knowledge of all the values at a place and this is reflected in updated statements of significance for places and in some cases, revised boundaries (Australian Heritage Commission 2003a, p. 12).

World heritage

Since 2001, Australia has had two more properties entered on the World Heritage List — Purnululu (Western Australia) and the Royal Exhibition Buildings, Melbourne. Australian World Heritage properties were the subject of periodic monitoring by the World Heritage Committee in 2003 and this highlighted both the values of outstanding universal significance in all 16 places on the List and their condition.

National heritage list

Provisions enabling the creation of a National List of Heritage Places came into effect on 1 January 2004 as a result of amendments to the EPBC Act to include national heritage as a matter of national environmental significance (see EPBC Act: Protected Matters <<http://www.deh.gov.au/epbc/matters/index.html>>). At January 2006 there were 22 places on the National Heritage List—one natural, 18 historic and three Indigenous places—some of these are landscapes with a range of heritage values at the national level such as Kurnell, Recherche Bay, and Castlemaine Diggings. By January 2006, 128 nominations had been received from the public.

Commonwealth heritage list

The same amendments created the Commonwealth Heritage List of places owned, managed or leased by the Australian Government. Inscription on the list imposes obligations on Australian Government agencies to ensure the protection of heritage places under their control. The Commonwealth Heritage List was launched in July 2004 and it now has 339 places, 87 per cent of which are historic places (see Commonwealth Heritage <<http://www.deh.gov.au/heritage/commonwealth/index>>).

National historic shipwrecks register

Since 2001, approximately 130 ships have been added to the Historic Shipwrecks Register, which is maintained by the Department of Environment and Heritage in partnership with state and territory heritage agencies. In 2000, 6500 shipwrecks had been listed (Lennon et al. 2001, p. 37). This figure can be only an approximation because more identified shipwrecks are constantly added as they reach their seventy-fifth anniversary of being sunk.

State and territories—historic heritage places

Increases in historic places listed in state and territory heritage registers are expected, given the amount of survey and assessment work undertaken in urban renewal and urban development. In 2000, 13 160 historic places were listed on state and territory registers and this has increased to 14 148 in 2005.

The widening scope of state and territory registers is confirmed by the range of places listed, which includes cemeteries, theatres, parks and gardens, significant urban vegetation, recreation reserves, baby health centres, sawmill sites and associated tramways, multicultural heritage such as warning signs in Italian at Fitzroy public baths, Chinese stores and Greek cafes in country towns, or group settlements such as New Italy in northern New South Wales, aerodromes, and roadside heritage such as interwar service stations.

During 2003, the Victorian Heritage Council commenced a review of its Heritage Register on the thirtieth anniversary of the passage of the *Historic Buildings Preservation Act 1974*, the first state heritage legislation in Australia. The Council noted that ‘the definition of what constitutes heritage has widened considerably, as has public ownership of the concept of, and involvement in, the process of heritage registration.’ They also noted that many sites on the Register are complex in fabric and history, and fit into more than one theme. For instance, ‘... Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Station Precinct ... is an example of some 16 Australian Historic Themes, including grazing stock, defending Australia, developing Australian construction industry, going to war, controlling the entry of people and disease, migrating, policing Victoria, establishing schools, incarcerating people, providing services and welfare, providing health services, dealing with human remains, living in and around Australian homes, moving goods and people and commemorating significant events and people’ (Heritage Council Victoria 2004c, p. 8). In addition, the precinct has Indigenous values and remnant coastal vegetation.

In Victoria, local government continues to play a major role in the identification and protection of the state’s cultural heritage in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; a total of 73 of the 79 municipalities have undertaken historic place studies, leading to state listings or Heritage Overlay notification in the planning schemes, and three municipalities have undertaken detailed archaeological surveys (Heritage Council Victoria 2004, p. 16). While the Heritage Council listings provide some interesting trends, local

government planning schemes are where most of the identification occurs—an estimated 100 000 places are covered by individual and area Heritage Overlay controls in 2004.

As a result of a targeted programme in 2004 in New South Wales, the community nominated 405 icons as heritage places of special importance that it wanted to have listed. A regional approach was also trialed in New South Wales to build a better state heritage register and fill in the thematic gaps. The methodology was tested in the central west in 2002 and, in close consultation with the local community, 600 items were identified. Of these, nearly 200 are potential state heritage items (NSW Heritage Office 2003, p. 3).

Of the 152 local government councils in New South Wales, 58 have more than 100 local heritage items in their local environment plans. Government agencies are required by the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW) to integrate heritage considerations in all their asset management processes. More than ten per cent of items identified in Sydney Water's heritage and conservation register are now listed on the State Heritage Register, including the Tank Stream and Hyde Park obelisk. In 2003–04, the iconic Sydney Opera House and Jenolan Caves were listed, as well as Cronulla Sand Dune, Wanda Beach Coastal landscape, Burra Bee Dee Aboriginal mission site near Coonabarabran (the first mission site to be listed on the NSW Heritage Register), Millers Point (perhaps the most significant urban precinct in Australia), community-valued ocean pools at The Entrance, Coogee and Newcastle, and the *HMAS Parramatta* shipwreck and memorials, and the Dunbar shipwreck group (NSW Heritage Office 2004, pp. 7–8).

Tasmania has increased the number of places protected by the *Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995* to 5288, while 29 historic sites are reserved under the provisions of the *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*. Cultural landscapes, Chinese mining sites, and hydroelectricity sites of significance were identified (Heritage Tasmania 2005). Major heritage effort has revolved around issues of redevelopment in Sullivan's Cove, Hobart and in Launceston.

Canberra's 'Garden City' planned suburbs—with their original characteristic relationship between streetscapes, land use patterns and built forms—are part of the environmental, social and cultural heritage of the Australian Capital Territory. Nine suburbs have been entered into the ACT Heritage Places Register in recognition of their place in the history of urban planning and residential development in Canberra. Furthermore, some experts suggest that they are of international significance (see Ward 2000). Rural heritage in the ACT is threatened by the expansion of greenfields suburban development; three homesteads were added to the register in an effort to retain them in the rural landscape setting that is integral to their heritage significance.

In South Australia, the rate of listing slowed. The state has been comprehensively surveyed since 1981 except for the far west and far north; there is now 'increasing community interest in urban character, that is, an interest in heritage beyond what is recorded in state and local heritage registers' (EPA South Australia 2003, p. 16). Local councils have been slow to take

advantage of the provisions of the *Development Act 1993* to protect local heritage places—only 28 of 68 have created local lists—and they require assistance to do so despite the extension of the heritage advisory services. Many historic, contact and Indigenous sites have been recorded and made public—but not registered—from finalised Federal Court cases such as De Rose Hill and Ngaanyatjarra from South Australia.

In the Northern Territory, telegraph stations, church precincts and homesteads were added to the register, but major mining heritage was destroyed through lack of protection at Pine Creek. Development assessments are now monitored to determine impacts on heritage.

In Western Australia, listings continued steadily to the state register, but community consultation is a major issue for precinct listings.

In Queensland, mining places continue to feature, although 42 per cent of state listed places were located in three cities—Brisbane, Townsville and Ipswich in 2002—and 15 of the 125 local government areas have no places listed (EPA 2003). Registers of historical heritage are maintained by 31 councils, but 75 per cent of the places listed were located in three cities, leaving a scattering of identified places across 28 councils and 94 without any survey (EPA 2003). Funding of \$2.725 million over five years was announced in March 2005 to update Queensland's list of heritage buildings and sites to improve their protection and give more certainty to developers, property owners and local councils

Local government listing of heritage places as an indicator of knowledge gives a much broader overview of the state of knowledge about heritage because it involves community level appreciation of and activity in identifying and protecting heritage places and objects. It may well be a better indicator of the state of community awareness about heritage than state and territory listings, but these latter are a better indicator of knowledge in that the citations for state and territory listings are generally required to give much more information about the listed place and comparative analyses than local heritage study data sheets. This state and territory listing information is available to the community through the heritage registers online. Non-statutory lists compiled by the National Trusts, Royal Australian Institute of Architects or the Institution of Engineers are precursors and guides for statutory listings.

In September 2005 the Productivity Commission surveyed the involvement of local government in historic heritage conservation. Almost three quarters of local councils responded—464 of 630 surveyed—and some 75 per cent of these have statutory lists that collectively cover more than 76 000 individual places and 1770 heritage areas (PC 2005, p. 34 and Appendix B). The number of individual places listed is an underestimate compared with the data supplied by state agencies, possibly because the Productivity Commission survey did not collect data on the number of individually listed places within these Heritage Areas.

State and territories—Indigenous heritage places

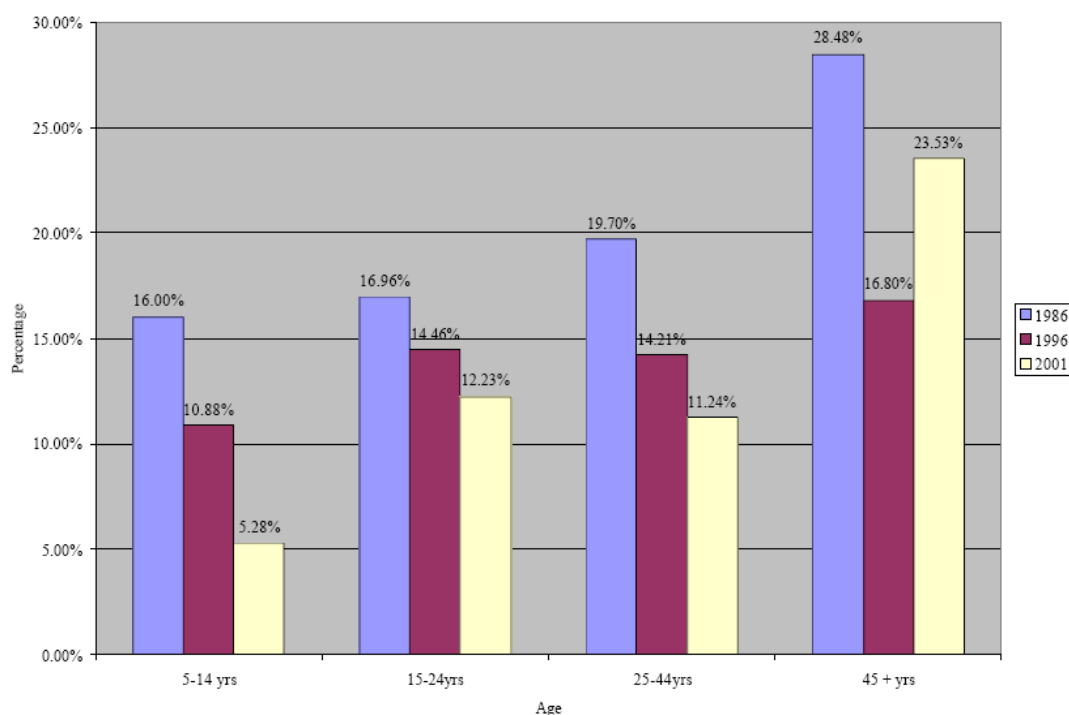
Many states and territories have inventories of all recorded sites, rather than heritage-listed sites or Indigenous places. There has been a marked increase in recording Indigenous sites. This is a result of new reporting arrangements and increased survey activity, often associated with environmental impact assessments in Queensland and post-bushfire surveys in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. In Western Australia, sites are recorded through heritage survey reports—1240 from 2001 to March 2005—with an average of three new heritage sites reported in each survey submitted to the Registrar of Aboriginal Sites of the Department of Indigenous Affairs.

A survey of 24 Indigenous organisations across Australia was conducted in 2004 (Open Mind Research Group 2005) to replicate the assessment of the state of Indigenous cultural heritage conducted for *Australia State of the Environment 2001 (SoE2001)*. Not as many or the same organisations were contacted as in 2001, although the survey covered all states and territories, urban and rural areas, and five types of organisations—Land Councils and Cooperatives, Aboriginal Corporations, Native Title representatives, Cultural Centres, and Indigenous Heritage Committees.

The survey found that heritage places and objects are generally well known within Indigenous communities, but not so outside of these communities; for example, Brambuk (Victoria) has 738 registered sites with only five major sites open to the public. Sometimes knowledge of heritage places was restricted to the families that are direct descendants of the traditional owners. Generally, the Elders considered that knowledge of heritage places was not sufficiently comprehensive within their Indigenous communities, particularly in the younger generation. Within the Tiwi Land Council, for example, there was ‘changing demographics with the older traditional leadership now dying out. Currently there are 900 under 14 years of age, of a total 2500 people’. This posed a substantial problem with ‘new Tiwi generational commitment’ (Open Mind Research Group 2005)

Knowledge of Indigenous languages has deteriorated nationwide since 2001. One of the main findings of the 2005 report was that the situation of Australia’s languages is very grave and requires urgent action. Of an original number of over 250 known Indigenous languages, about 145 are still spoken in Australia but about 110 are in the severely and critically endangered categories—they are only spoken by small groups of people mostly over 40 years old (see Figure 1). Eighteen languages are ‘strong’ in the sense of being spoken by all age groups, but three or four are showing some signs of moving into endangerment (Table 1). Many other languages are not fully spoken by anybody, but words and phrases are used and there is great community support in many parts of the country for reclamation and heritage learning programmes for such languages (AIATSIS and FATSIL 2005).

Figure 1: Proportion of Indigenous language speakers by age group Australia, 1986–2001



Source: AIATSIS and FATSIL (2005, p. 64)

Table 1: Indigenous Language Speakers by Language Endangerment Age Profile Index in Australia, Census 1996 and 2001

Age Profile Index	Endangerment status	1996	2001
1		2 (5%)	6 (14%)
2	Endangered	7 (17%)	11 (26%)
3		5 (12%)	7 (17%)
4	Not immediately in	10 (24%)	4 (10%)
5	danger	18* (43%)	14 (33%)

* includes two languages which should have lesser index

Source: AIATSIS and FATSIL (2005, p. 49)

Natural heritage places

There is no specific data for natural heritage places except for the 82 places added to the Register of the National Estate between 2001 and the end of 2003. These included endangered native grasslands, mound springs, fish fossil sites, and the flora and fauna of Bindoon and Mulchea Defence Training areas in Western Australia (Australian Heritage Commission 2003a, p. 40). The South Australian Heritage Register has 54 geological monuments

registered of its total of 433 such monuments. There are other state and territory listings of natural places, for example, the NSW State Heritage Register includes the Bombo geological site, the North East rainforests, and Wingecarribee swamp, all of which also have cultural values.

Surrogate data from the biodiversity indicator 'extent and comprehensiveness of terrestrial protected areas' show that there has been an increase in the area of terrestrial protected areas between 1997 and 2002 from 59.8 million hectares to 77.5 million hectares in 6755 reserves. This biodiversity framework does not distinguish icon habitats, the key natural heritage interest. The term 'natural heritage' has almost disappeared as the use of 'biodiversity' increased in popular usage and in studies (Dr Steve Cork, pers. comm.).

During the reporting period, the Heritage Division of the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage has acquired many data sets for its Australian Natural Heritage Assessment Tool (ANHAT) to assist in comparative analysis of heritage attributes such as species richness and distribution across bioregions. It is expected that this analysis will support the assessment of current nominations of natural heritage places and nominations that may be conducted in the near future for places such as:

- Western Australia—Mound Springs, Australian Alps National Parks, Sydney Basin National Parks, Stirling Ranges National Park, Cape Range and Ningaloo Reef and Barrow Island
- Queensland—Cooloola section of the Great Sandy National Park, Great Sandy Strait and Wide Bay Military Training Area
- Northern Territory—Western MacDonnell Ranges
- South Australia—Flinders Ranges
- Tasmania—Tarkine Wilderness Area.

Heritage objects and collections

Heritage objects are part of the significance of a place with which they were associated. Some heritage objects or collections may be significant in their own right. Victorian heritage legislation now allows such objects and collections to be registered without being associated with a registered place, whether or not they are held by a government collecting institution.

Knowledge of heritage objects nationally is largely confined to information about the documentation of collections of state, territory and Commonwealth collecting institutions, and local and regional museums and universities. These museum collections are often distinct from place collections.

At the end of June 2004, there were 548 public library and archive organisations operating through 1754 locations. These organisations had a total of 13 282 employees at the end of June 2004. They also had 6853 people working as volunteers during the month of June 2004.

During 2003–04, there were 105 million visits to local government, national and state libraries, representing an average of five visits per head of population (ABS 2005b). It is assumed that all of the archives hold heritage collections. There has been a major focus on significance assessment in the last five years.

At the end of June 2004, there were 1329 museum locations operating in Australia, comprising: 160 art museums and galleries, 381 historic properties and sites, 673 social history museums, and 116 other types of museums. During 2003–04, there were 31.2 million admissions to Australia’s museums. Just under three-quarters (73.5 per cent) of museums had an Internet presence at the end of June 2004.

At this time, there were 54.9 million museum objects and artworks located in Australia's museums, but only 9.7 per cent (5.3 million) were on display for public viewing (Table 2). Museums with 20 or more employees held the largest proportion of museum objects and artworks (84 per cent or 46.2 million), but displayed only 2.9 per cent of their collection (1.3 million items) to the public.

Table 2: Number of museum objects and artworks in Australia, 2003–04

Museum objects and artworks	Size of institution (by number of employees)			Total number of objects and artworks
	Nil	1–19 employees	20 or more employees	
Number in collections	2 779 000	5 984 200	46 152 300	54 915 500
On display for public viewing (%)	61.1	38.3	2.9	9.7
Accessible to the public online (%)	1.3	6.4	13.1	11.8
Documented or recorded in manual or written form (%)	55.5	45.0	72.7	68.8
Documented or recorded in electronic form or on computer (%)	17.6	25.2	41.9	38.8
Surveyed for preservation or conservation treatment by a professional curator or conservator (%)	9.3	22.2	21.9	21.3
Assessed as requiring preservation or conservation treatment (%)	9.5	8.2	4.6	5.2

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2005, p. 12)

During 2003–04 there were 224 032 new acquisitions of museum objects and artworks, with the majority (73.8 per cent or 165 417) acquired through donations. For the same period, donations and bequests of artworks totalled 13 484 items and were valued at \$45.6 million. At the end of June 2004, the majority (68.8 per cent) of museum objects and artworks were

documented or recorded in manual (written) form, while 38.8 per cent were documented or recorded in electronic form (on computer). Museum objects and artworks could be documented and recorded in both forms (ABS 2005a).

There has been no survey to replicate that carried out for *SoE2001* on collections management especially on cataloguing, which provides the data for this knowledge indicator. In 2002, the Heritage Collections Council commissioned a study into the key needs of collecting institutions (<<http://amol.org.au/craft/publications/keyneeds/contents.asp>>). The sample survey had 408 respondents across all types. Although a majority of collections reported that most of their collections were accessioned, there is a high level of uncatalogued original materials in Australian heritage collections; furthermore, lack of uniformity in cataloguing systems across heritage collections has also created major obstacles in initiatives to create a national database of heritage collections (Deakin University 2002, pp. 67–68). It is hoped that the new Collections Council of Australia, which was established in August 2004, will address these issues.

Trends are as follows:

- New Australian government legislation has created a more coherent three-tier heritage system, with each tier of government responsible for the identification of heritage places and protection of heritage values so identified.
- Listing of historic heritage places continues at a slow but steady pace on state and territory registers, reflecting the results of thematic and regional surveys, but the major activity in the developed states and territories is in the local government area.
- Cultural landscapes are a new category of heritage place being listed in Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and New South Wales; progress is slow on listings in this category because of increasing threats such as urban expansion, wind farm construction, marina development, rural subdivision and new rural land uses.
- Recording of Indigenous heritage places has increased but listings under provisions of the EPBC Act have all but stalled.
- Cataloguing of heritage collections is static and requires national standards as well as resources.
- A more strategic approach is needed to target listing gaps cascaded down from thematic studies.

Physical condition and integrity of heritage

The assessment of the physical condition of heritage places and objects gives an indication of the integrity of their values. It also alerts managers to the pressures impacting on the heritage values of these places and objects and the need for conservation-based responses.

Condition of natural heritage places

There is still no agreed measure for 'condition' of natural heritage places, although there are many indicators of ecosystem health, such as percentage of weed cover, presence of introduced animals, and presence of representative species. With nearly two-thirds in protected area reserves, public land managers should be able to assess the condition of their land. This is a key issue for resolution.

During the reporting period, significant progress was made by park agencies including Parks Victoria and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) (Department of Environment and Conservation) in preparing 'state of the parks' reports.

The Parks Victoria *State of the Parks 2000* report summarises the natural values, environmental condition and key management challenges facing 125 individual parks (Parks Victoria 2000). The NPWS is developing a comprehensive 'state of the parks' reporting system. This system will improve the quality and quantity of information available to the public about natural and cultural heritage, the pressures faced by this heritage and the role the parks system is playing in its conservation. The inaugural NPWS report, *State of the Parks 2001*, represents the first stage in the development of this system. It provides a snapshot of conservation values at state level, and profiles a key set of 67 parks and reserves (NSW NPWS 2001).

In addition, the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service has prepared the first State of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Report (PWS 2004). The report marks a significant step in making management of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) more open, informed, and accountable.

The main purposes of the report are: to provide a structured, evidence-based account of how management of the TWWHA is performing in achieving its management objectives and obligations under the World Heritage Convention (to identify, protect, conserve, present, transmit to future generations and, if appropriate, rehabilitate the World Heritage values of the property); to provide informed feedback that guides management to better achieve objectives and deliver desired outcomes; and to increase the transparency of management for the TWWHA. The main inputs to this evaluation were:

- scientific data and other measured evidence about performance indicators (especially in relation to the management objectives for protecting, conserving and rehabilitating the natural and cultural heritage)
- information and professional advice from experts (especially natural and cultural heritage specialists)
- the views of the general public and onsite visitors (especially in relation to the management objectives for presenting the natural and cultural heritage)

- assessments and critical comment on management performance by internal and external stakeholders closely associated with management of the TWWHA (Parks and Wildlife Service 2004).

Community appreciation of condition varies. Perceived by the public as catastrophic in the Australian Alps in 2003, bushfire is part of the natural cycle and it leads to new ecological stages in habitats. Yet there is evidence that prolonged burning will change the distribution of certain forest types, such as alpine ash, and may lead to loss of that natural heritage type (Gill et al. 2004). Dieback of vegetation from prolonged drought or climate variability, or from insect attack, may also lead to loss and changed distribution. Re-invigoration of Indigenous mosaic burning regimes in arid lands has been seen as a plus by Indigenous communities and ecologists, but as destructive by ecotour operators and often by the public as well.

On private land, the amount of funding requested from the Natural Heritage Trust for animal control, plant regeneration, exclusion fencing, weed control or replanting could be regarded as a surrogate indicator of poor condition of the land. The sorting of these funding applications by heritage listed places has not been attempted.

Condition of Indigenous heritage places

Legal ‘consents to destroy’ issued as part of planning development applications are a very minor proportion of losses to Indigenous places. Incremental loss through natural erosion processes, vehicular or pedestrian access, stock grazing, agricultural tillage and ploughing, deliberate earthworks or ignorance of the site features is more common. As discussed in 2001 (Lennon et al. 2001, pp. 47–9), it is difficult to measure condition when Indigenous people generally prefer that the place is undisturbed; however, maintenance is required to ‘keep country straight’ by burning, cleaning out rock wells or protecting art sites.

Protection of Indigenous heritage places has improved as a result of increased involvement of Indigenous people in their management through myriads of Indigenous governance, natural resource management and regional agreements now operating. This is particularly the case with World Heritage areas (except the Great Barrier Reef), national parks and some other public reserves as well as in the increased number of Indigenous Protected Areas (see ‘Responses’ and areas handed back to traditional owners for joint management. In addition, Victoria, South Australia and the ACT have statutory requirements for decision-making to be delegated to Indigenous groups.

The sample survey of Indigenous organisations found the following key issues regarding protection of local Indigenous heritage (in order of priority):

- inadequate and uncertain funding to ensure managing indigenous heritage
- developments—housing estates, logging, quarries, wind farms and marinas—being constructed on culturally significant sites and destroying Indigenous heritage

- inconsistent or total lack of appropriate and timely consultation with Indigenous communities about developments concerning the regions
- lack of legal protection and enforcement to ensure that processes are followed
- lack of resources for local communities to physically manage their own cultural sites
- lack of commitment among the newer generation to care for country and carry on Indigenous traditions in the communities
- restricted access to freehold and leasehold land, which impacted on spiritual connection to heritage by being unable to conduct ceremonies
- infestations—pests, ants, rabbits, cane toads, invasive plant species—in cultural sites
- effects of weather, flooding, climate change, fire and soil erosion on Indigenous sites
- widespread farming had wiped out some species of vegetation once used by ancestors for medicines.

Managing tourism and access to heritage sites was an issue in Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia. While tourism was encouraged as a source of revenue by some Indigenous organisations, the funding to ensure site protection was often not available.

Functioning Indigenous heritage committees are a positive indicator of action to ensure survival of Indigenous culture, but many are inadequately resourced to support a range of staff functions. These committees are possibly the best means of ensuring protection of the integrity of Indigenous heritage in a region, although employment of a cultural officer or ranger was considered essential to facilitate consultation and heritage protection. Many committees are very unhappy about their reduced advisory ‘voice’ in the new administrative arrangements that post-date the Australian Heritage Commission.

Condition of historic places

The 2001 survey of 12 per cent of the historic heritage places entered in the Register of the National Estate was replicated for this report. The survey provides a simple overview of the continued existence, condition, integrity and use of a sample of the nation’s historic heritage, and allows trends in the health of that heritage to be identified. In all, 1287 places were inspected, but each sample local government area had a minimum of 20 listed places (Pearson and Marshall 2004, p. 1).

Unfortunately, large parts of Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia were not effectively represented in the survey. This paucity of information about heritage sites in remote areas was identified in the 2000 survey, and remains an issue for heritage reporting. The 2004 study drew on revised citations from the Register of the National Estate, state and territory sources, as well as from the embryonic Commonwealth and

National List registers, allowing better consideration of condition, integrity and works in the context of clearly articulated heritage values (Pearson and Marshall 2004, p. 6).

The survey found that trends in condition and integrity indicate minor changes during the 2000–04 period, with some incremental changes, but not many dramatic changes (Table 3).

Table 3: Changes in integrity and condition, 2000–04

	2000			2004	
	Number	% of sample		Number	% of sample
Survey sample size	1218			1257	
High integrity	510	41.9%		477	37.9%
Medium integrity	603	49.5%		690	54.9%
Low integrity	105	8.6%		90	7.2%
Good condition	538	44.2%		561	44.6%
Fair condition	611	50.2%		608	48.4%
Poor condition	69	5.7%		88	7.0%

Source: Pearson and Marshall (2004, p. 17).

The slight decrease in the proportion of places with high integrity often indicates unsympathetic changes and decay. Conversely, there was a slight increase in the proportion with medium integrity, as a result of decline in integrity of places with previously high integrity, and improvements in integrity due to conservation work and removal of accretions. The lack of dramatic or steady improvement in the integrity and condition of heritage places might itself be an indicator of a problem with Australia’s historic heritage. That is, in an affluent society, improvement is expected and yet there is no convincing evidence of this in the two surveys. Other trends are listed in Table 4.

Table 4: Trends in condition and integrity in historic heritage places surveyed in 2001 and 2004.

Historic heritage condition	2000	2004
Commercial premises in urban centres and regional towns	Good condition; but exteriors have high integrity; Interiors: low	Same trend: historical associations and functional significance much diminished
Prominent buildings in rural towns		Adapted by retail chains, especially clothing

Prominent buildings in cities and regional towns		Increasing number subject to facadism: converting to 'modern' retail standards
Vacant places	42% of those surveyed	Same %
Places subject to conservation works	Undertaken prior to 2000	Increasing deterioration due to no maintenance
Affluent regional centres, including coastal towns		Increasing land values threatening heritage integrity
Former government buildings	Many empty	Streetscape value maintained but modifications destroyed individual heritage integrity
Heritage listed places as a class fare better	Need for more systematic survey	Obligations placed on planning approvals to consider heritage
Heritage listing of places has not been systematic	Minimal protection at the local government level	Listings but many councils are overtly pro-development
Redundant rural buildings of heritage value	Noted as problem	True scale and extent of this problem still not known
Government buildings remains at risk	Echuca railway engine shed, Burra railway station and Rockhampton Post Office	Customs House Williamstown, Ararat Mental Hospital, Townsville Customs House, State Government Printing Office in Perth
Churches: highest integrity and best class of heritage place	Conservation problems developing, such as water penetration	Trend of ageing church fabric and inadequate maintenance funds continued; increasing redundancy
Subdivision of church land		Continuing trend impairing curtilage values
Masonry of heritage buildings	Painting: to detriment of heritage values and degrades integrity	Trend continues
Provision of interpretative information		Ranges from zero to good: Qld Heritage Trails
Interpretative material installed as part of conservation works	Deterioration observed in signage	Continuing trend: town streetscape panels and historic route panels are 'tatty and tired'

Source: Pearson and Marshall (2004, pp.17–19)

Heritage Victoria undertook a survey of condition of a proportion of the Victorian Heritage Register in 2002–03. Its self-selecting sample led to subjective interpretations of condition but positive outcomes have resulted: more detailed information about the places from those with the best knowledge of the place, and good relations with their owners and managers (Heritage Council Victoria 2004a, p. 37).

The EPHC noted that there had been no comprehensive survey of places whose heritage value had been destroyed either as a result of neglect or through modification or demolition (EPHC 2004, p. 2). The Productivity Commission has been unable to derive an accurate assessment of the condition of listed historic places and of trends in condition and quality (PC 2005, p. 38). It also reported on the debates about adaptive reuse of historic heritage places as a means of ensuring retention and future conservation *versus* those who regarded this as sacrificing heritage values, particularly with changes to churches and community buildings (PC 2005, pp. 20–21).

Condition of heritage objects and collections

As the condition of heritage objects affects their ability to provide information on the state of the environment from which they were collected, assessing their condition is a necessary task. The 2001 sample survey of collections surveyed for preservation treatment, the amount of such treatment carried out, and the proportion of collections stored in appropriate environmental conditions has not been replicated. The Heritage Collections Council Needs Survey identified some needs that may be regarded as a surrogate for existing condition: conservation treatments and repair of objects was the second highest priority in the needs analysis of Collecting Institutions (Deakin University 2002, p 36)

Resources for development of public programmes and collection outreach have been at the expense of collection management activities. Consequently, collections management (for example, conservation, cataloguing and collection research) requires greater recognition by managers of collecting institutions and government, and adequate allocation of resources to undertake these activities. Key issues are listed in Table 5.

Table 5: Key issues identified as affecting condition of heritage collections

Issue	Need
Heritage buildings	Restrictions on alterations; Cost of maintenance, particularly for small community museums; Special needs of the moveable heritage collections housed within heritage listed buildings; Local governments don't realize that a 'heritage' building is not necessarily the most appropriate accommodation for their local heritage collection

High cost of air conditioning	Prevents developing environmentally stable environments for housing collections in tropical places.
Lack of storage space for small museums	Common need but also reflects need for implementing collection development policies
Conservation -area of major and critical need for heritage collections in museums, galleries, libraries and archives	Big gap exists between what might be achieved and the level of funds and resources available to make reasonable progress
Conservation treatments	Major state and national collecting institutions appear to be 'better off' than small collecting institutions, as the latter rarely have any specialist conservation staff.
Conservation outreach is 'ad hoc'	Majority of state and national heritage collecting institutions provide some conservation advice and support to regional collections but generally see the preservation of their own collections as top priority
Preventive conservation is widely considered to be the highest priority	This arrests deterioration of collections and so decreases need for expensive interventionist conservation in the future

Source: (Deakin University 2002, pp. 65–66)

Preventive conservation can be effective only when the most significant elements of the collection are known. Therefore the highest priorities remain as significance assessment and collection management.

Other issues affecting the condition of heritage places in Australia

The effect of population change, technological change, economic restructuring and urban expansion, consolidation and development on the condition of heritage places continues a largely negative trend, except for the premium real estate value placed on some historic properties, such as those advertised in the prestige properties section of *The Australian* newspaper. In addition, declining demand for services offered by historic heritage places, the opportunity costs of renovation or redevelopment, and increasing costs of maintenance were also noted as pressures affecting historic heritage places (PC 2005, pp. 15–19).

Population change

There were about 20 million people living in Australia in 2005. Between 1994 and 1999, the fastest growing areas were located in urban fringe areas; urban consolidation has been reviving growth in established inner-city areas of Sydney and Melbourne. These patterns have implications for maintaining integrity in heritage places subject to redevelopment pressures or

new subdivisions cutting up the previous patterns in cultural landscapes, particularly the colonial estates in the Cumberland Plain of Sydney or dairying landscapes along the coastal foothills.

Growth, of a lesser extent, has also occurred in some inland regional centres due to in-migration from surrounding regions; for example, Mildura and Ballarat in Victoria and Dubbo in New South Wales. This growth occurred because of agricultural restructuring and mechanisation (resulting in larger and fewer farms and lower demand for farm workers), and improvements in transport and communications (allowing industries and services in the regional centre to service a wide area). Crossroads hamlets and rural villages decline or vanish and heritage structures associated with agriculture and transport are abandoned or deteriorate as a result.

Population decline in rural areas dependent on mining was observed between 1994 and 1999 in Broken Hill, Mount Isa, East Pilbara, Mount Magnet and Laverton in Western Australia, and West Coast Tasmania. Major population declines in other regions can be linked to changing levels of activity in particular industries (ABS 2000). Abandonment of redundant, rural-based industrial heritage is a result; it goes unrecorded and its condition is subject to vagaries of natural decay, vandalism or theft. Loss of population usually means loss of connection with the fabric and stories of heritage places. The population decline in Broken Hill should be balanced against the city's success in developing heritage tourism as a major industry.

Trends discussed in 2001 continue with the term 'sea change' being given to the rush to live near the coastal edge in new settlements, high-rise developments, or sprawling suburban corridors. While the beach has long been a favourite holiday destination for Australians, the increasing tendency for people to live near the coast is shown by 61 statistical local areas with an average annual growth that is much greater than the Australian average of 1.2 per cent per annum (ABS 2004a). This growth puts pressure on local heritage places, as illustrated in the 2004 condition survey for historic heritage places. Increasing development along the coastline—constructing houses, aquaculture, marinas and boat ramps—is having a significant impact on coastal landscapes. This is a consistent pressure for the 61 above-average growth areas along the Australian coastline. In particular, wind farm construction has focused attention on the need to protect the integrity of coastal landscape values in South Australia and Victoria (EPA South Australia 2003, p. 160).

In the 2001 Census, 410 000 people were recorded as of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. While the largest proportion (31 per cent) lived in major cities, almost half (49 per cent) lived in outer regional, remote, and very remote areas combined, compared with 13 per cent of the total Australian population. The Indigenous population in very remote areas increased by 16 per cent between 1991 and 2001, largely due to rising birth rates. The increased propensity for people to identify as being of Indigenous origin was predominantly a factor in urban area increases. Maintaining connection to country becomes a key issue for

urban Indigenous people, while intergenerational transmission of cultural heritage practices and ecological knowledge is an issue for maintaining integrity of traditions as illustrated in the 2005 survey of Indigenous organisations (Open Mind Research Group 2005).

Effects of tourism on heritage places

Tourism is one of Australia’s largest and fastest growing industries. Heritage places are a pivotal component of many forms of tourism. In 2004, domestic and international tourists who visited a heritage place spent an estimated \$7.8 billion on trips in which they visited at least one historic place (The Allen Consulting Group 2005, p. vi). Specialist tourism ventures whether nature-based, adventure, Indigenous, historic, cultural or ecotourism all rely strongly on heritage and heritage places. The New South Wales Historic Towns Project is encouraging heritage tourism by providing highway signs only for those towns that present a representative sample of genuine historic places.

As the impact of tourism on the condition of heritage places can be either negative or positive, the EPHC agreed in May 2002 to develop a national policy encouraging better integration of heritage into tourism. A task force published *Going Places: Developing natural and cultural heritage tourism in Australia*, an issues paper and a key opportunities paper (NTHT 2003). The Productivity Commission noted that benefits from the generation of economic activity in heritage-based communities were somewhat offset by negative impacts from the increased use, such as congestion, leakage of locally generated revenue, fluctuating demands on local infrastructure and resources, displacement of local services and physical impacts and degradation of properties and landscapes (PC 2005, p. 23).

World Heritage areas continue to be a magnet for tourism, generating regional economic development. This is exemplified by the trends for the Wet Tropics (Table 6).

Table 6: Wet Tropics visitor trends and projections, 1993–2016

Numbers of visitors	Trends			Projections			
	1993	1996	1999	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total visitors ('000)	1 997	2 292	2 610	2 840	3 430	4 000	4 550
Average daily	29 523	31 830	36 764	40 164	49 137	57 808	66 233

Source: Wet Tropics Management Authority (2002, p. 40)

Annual visitor numbers to these icon places have increased generally since 2001, especially for the Great Barrier Reef, Purnululu and the Tasmanian Wilderness. Their importance to the regional economy is underlined by this continuation. After the 2002 September 11 terrorism attack, there was a relative increase in domestic tourism to World Heritage properties (Table 7) compared with international tourism. Tourism figures can relate to both condition and integrity of heritage places and community awareness of the heritage values.

Table 7: Numbers of visitors to World Heritage properties, 1996-2004

Property	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Australian Fossil Mammal Site (Naracoorte) ^A	42 000	39 600	67 000	78 500	na	68 479	70 737	72 294	70 000
Australian Fossil Mammal Site (Riversleigh) ^B	3 000	3 000	3 000	3 000	3 000	4 000	4 500	5 000	5 500
Central Eastern Rainforest Reserve (Australia) (NSW) ^C	807 000	805 874	791 450	742 600	773 956				
Central Eastern Rainforest Reserve (Australia) (Qld) ^D	1 238 750	1 269 500	na	na	1 331 000				
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park ^E	1 672 537	1 725 349	2 945 994	3 763 479	418 (to June)	1 854 423	1 922 318	1 920 350	1 948 768
The Greater Blue Mountains Area ^F	526 423	527 737	565 303	528 636	580 520				
Fraser Island ^G	272 139	278 889	291 404	297 621	314 051	300 295	335 989	366 231	303 516
Heard and McDonald Islands ^H	15	5	5	6	28	24	48	28*	28*
Kakadu ^I	219 287	205 795	199 387	211 491	200 752	1197 527	189 134	170 423	169 955
Lord Howe Island ^J	9 059	9 731	10 688	14 671	6 565 (to June)	12 488	12 559	13 185	13 721
Macquarie Island ^K	351	490	313	374	329	556	371	202	433
Purnululu ^L						21 451	21 060	21 411	22 816
Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens ^M						349 958*	350 136*	432 479*	445 446
Shark Bay ^N	83 672	93 178	102 081	103 076	88 948	101 946	104 607	106 364	96 740

Tasmanian Wilderness ^O	453	449	474	500	483	539	540	615	655
Uluru-Kata Tjuta ^P	337	337	339	371	387	394	391	362	345
	018	735	605	939	065	315	574	428	638
Wet Tropics of Queensland ^Q	4 770 000 in 1993 (No data collected during this period)					4 650	4 650	4 650	4 650
Willandra ^R	30 546	33 078	16 038	35 118	36 400	40 807	na	47 361	na

Source: Heritage Division, Department of the Environment and Heritage 2005 (compiled from the various data sets)

^A Figures based on records of visitor fees

^B Figures estimated by site managers

^C Figures collated from vehicle and pedestrian counters, and ranger estimates

^D Figures based upon number of camping permits issued, vehicle counters and ranger estimates

^E Figures represent number of visitor days spent on commercial tour vessels within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The total number of visitors, including private vessels would be much higher

^F Figures collated from vehicle and pedestrian counters, ticket sales and ranger estimates

^G Figures collated from number of people covered by vehicle service permits and commercial tour permits

^H Figures represent the number of persons who go ashore Heard Island. *Australian Antarctic science program expeditions are generally organised by season, generally extending over the summer period, therefore the figures for 2003 and 2004 represent the same 29 persons

^I Figures based on pedestrian counter calibrations

^J Figures represent the number of head tax receipts for the Island Service Levy, paid by all visitors to the island

^K Figures based on number of passenger landings from tour vessels

^L Figures collected through the visitor centre on each entry into the park

^M Figures are collated according to hirers of the venue, numbers are therefore approximate. * The Royal Exhibition Building was only listed as World Heritage in 2004

^N Figure represent number of people passing entry toll station

^O Figures collated from agency estimates, track counters and the Tasmanian Visitor Survey (conducted by Tourism Tasmania)

^P Figures represent park entry ticket sales

^Q Figures calculated as average visits per year to 100 of the main visitor sites within the World Heritage areas. Figures are based upon detailed site surveys in conjunction with vehicle counters

^R Figures collated from vehicle counter calibrations

na – Figures unavailable for particular year.

The condition of many natural heritage areas visited by large numbers of tourists has improved due to construction of paths and boardwalks through fragile environments such as wetlands or Aboriginal middens. The condition of some historic heritage properties has been improved by conservation works as part of heritage trails programmes, such as the original 1859 Cardwell Post Office in north Queensland, or the conservation of buildings in the main streets of country towns and the reinstatement of verandahs on many buildings in Broken Hill and Mudgee. Repairs to dry stone walls are enhancing their condition in the landscape at

Kiama and in the Melton Shire in Victoria, where a ‘Pride of Place Program’ grant of \$180 000 enabled conservation of the cultural landscape patterns shaped by the area’s early settlers. Many historic buildings, temporarily unoccupied, have been developed for tourist accommodation such as lighthouse keeper’s quarters at Wilsons Promontory or the Pilot Station at Camden Haven.

Aboriginal tourism gives Indigenous people the chance to tell their story in their way, to share cultural insights, traditional practices and contemporary concerns with non-Indigenous Australians and international visitors. Indigenous communities view tourism as a means of both educating others about Indigenous culture, and creating employment and training opportunities at a local level. Despite these benefits, in New South Wales only 39 of 250 Aboriginal tour operations were Aboriginal-owned in 2001. Europe is the strongest market for Aboriginal tourism. While 35 per cent of German tourists made a trip to the outback, only five per cent of Japanese tourists made the same journey in 1999–2000. Significantly, 37 per cent of international visitors expressing ‘high’ or ‘medium’ interest in Aboriginal tourism left Australia without participating in an Aboriginal tourism experience (ABS 2004c).

Despite the conclusion in the 2001 State of Environment report (Lennon et al. 2001, p. 79)—that the *monitoring of impacts* was required to assess the condition of the iconic World Heritage places and *surveys to evaluate* whether visitors learnt about the heritage values of these places—neither has occurred. The diminishing resource of historical archaeology because of intensive urban redevelopment has been acknowledged in New South Wales, and there is, increasingly, encouragement for *in situ* retention and above-ground interpretation to mitigate this impact.

In 2004, 3.3 million Australian travellers on overnight trips took at least one activity related to history or heritage. An additional 1.9 million domestic travellers on day trips undertook at least one activity related to history or heritage, while about 27 per cent of international tourists visited heritage places with the Sydney Opera House, The Rocks, the Blue Mountains and the Great Barrier Reef in the top ten destinations (The Allen Consulting Group 2005, pp. 20–22).

Trends are as follows:

- There are still no agreed measures for condition of natural heritage places, despite many indicators of ecosystem health.
- Historic heritage places remain generally static without steady improvement in their condition; growth centres and coastal areas are experiencing pressures that impact on the integrity and condition of heritage places and surrounding landscapes through urban expansion, consolidation and redevelopment; rural decline can be expected to result in abandoned and deteriorated heritage places.

- The condition of Indigenous heritage places has improved as a result of increased involvement of Indigenous people in site management, but there are huge variations in resources, intergenerational involvement and the skills available.
- The condition of heritage objects and collections generally relates to storage condition, which are inadequate in many small museums and not environmentally controlled in places with climate extremes; conservation treatment of collections remains a high priority.

Responses to conserve heritage

This section comments on responses to conserve heritage, including funding for heritage and heritage legislation changes to meet pressures and reflect changes in approaches to heritage protection and conservation.

Responses to conserve natural heritage places

The Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) was established by the Australian Government in 1996 to help restore Australia's environment, following the on-ground work undertaken by Landcare. It is the largest financial commitment to environmental action in Australia's history.

By 2004, \$1.4 billion had been invested in the NHT and related programmes for more than 11 900 projects, involving an estimated 400 000 Australians. The extension of funding to 2007 has resulted in its transition to a regional delivery model that concentrates on implementing the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) to tackle natural resource management issues at a landscape scale. Although not specifically targeted at cultural heritage in those landscapes, it is hoped that cultural heritage will be conserved as part of the overall strategy. There have been variations over the reporting period in the operational budgets of most public land management agencies despite NHT assistance for off-reserve conservation. The *Courier Mail* (Brisbane) reported on 6 May 2005 that Kakadu National Park has a budget of \$10.18 per hectare whereas the Cape York parks have a budget of \$1.30/ha dropping to \$1.20/ha from 1 July 2005.

Figures for funding the management of identified specific natural heritage places over the reporting period are difficult to assemble. Protected areas, including World Heritage properties, may be seen as a broad surrogate. NHT funding for World Heritage management from 1996–97 to 2003–04 was \$94.7 million, of which more than two-thirds went to two properties: the Wet Tropics and the Tasmanian Wilderness. Funding for the four World Heritage properties managed by Commonwealth agencies (Great Barrier Reef, Kakadu National Park, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park and Heard and McDonald Islands) comprised about 89 per cent of the total Commonwealth budget for managing World Heritage properties.

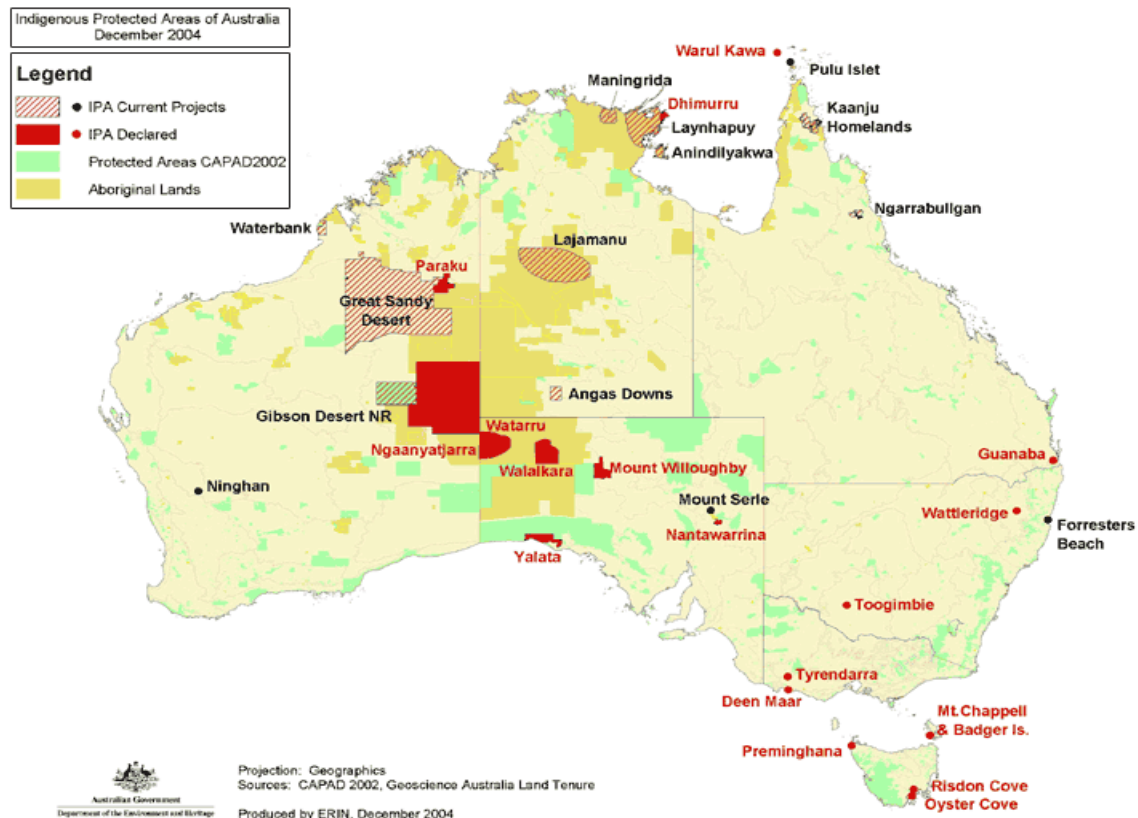
By 2002, the area of protected land (<www.deh.gov.au/parks/nrs/capad/index.html>) in Australia had increased to more than ten per cent or 77.5 million hectares managed in 6755

protected area reserves. In 2001, there were an estimated 163 million hectares of native forest in Australia. More than 12 per cent of this forest was in nature conservation reserves (National Forest Inventory database <<http://www.affa.gov.au/nfi>>).

Regional Forest Agreements were entered into between the commonwealth and state governments to guarantee access to forest resources and to set up an adequate, comprehensive and representative reserve system for the biological diversity of Australian forests. As part of the process, places of heritage significance were identified and assessed. Five agreements led to an increase of about 1.7 million hectares of forest area being included in conservation reserves between 1997 and 2002.

In 2000, a new category of Indigenous Protected Areas was established and, at March 2005, there were 19 Indigenous Protected Areas, totalling 13.2 million hectares (Figure 2). They ranged in size from the 9.8 million hectares of Ngaanyatjarra <<http://www.deh.gov.au/indigenous/ipa/declared/ngaanyatjarra.html>> (Western Australia) to 1270 hectares in Chappell and Badger Islands (Tasmania). Indigenous Protected Areas <<http://www.deh.gov.au/indigenous/fact-sheets/ipa.html>> now account for 18 per cent of Australia's protected areas. Traditional and ongoing Indigenous knowledge is increasingly accepted alongside scientific information as a valid and necessary information input to biodiversity management. This new development also recognises the custodianship of Australia's biodiversity by Indigenous peoples.

Figure 2: Location of Indigenous Protected Areas in Australia



Increased interest has been shown by non-government organisations in acquiring or managing land for nature conservation so they can work towards regeneration of vegetation cover and habitat restoration for endangered species, such as the eastern barred bandicoot (*Perameles gunnii*) at 'Mooramong', a National Trust farming property in western Victoria (Heritage Victoria 2003). Groups supported by subscribers like Australian Bush Heritage (<http://www.bushheritage.org>) have purchased remnant habitats and threatened ecosystems to supplement government efforts in national parks; Australian Bush Heritage now manages 18 reserves across Australia. World Wildlife Fund, Birds Australia, Trust for Nature (Victoria), The Nature Conservancy and various private foundations all manage land for nature conservation. Some of this is adjacent to national parks such as Carnarvon Gorge (Queensland) and some is remnant threatened ecosystems.

Trends are as follows:

- Extension of the National Heritage Trust will continue to support on-ground natural heritage conservation works, although the impact of this on condition of heritage places has not been assessed.
- There has been an increase in the area and number of protected area reserves—national parks, Indigenous Protected Areas—but declining operational budgets.
- There has been an increase in private conservation reserves.

Responses to conserve historic heritage

Total funding dispersed from the Commonwealth's Cultural Heritage Projects Program from 2000–01 to 2005 is \$10.6 million, which includes \$1.0 million for Indigenous projects. With the establishment of the new heritage system in 2004, Commonwealth funding is now applied mainly to the National Heritage List and Commonwealth-owned properties. The National Heritage Investment Initiative is budgeted to provide \$10.5 million between 2005–06 and 2008–09 to provide financial incentives for restoration and conservation of places of national significance (PC 2005, pp. 32, 49). The lack of Commonwealth funding for historic heritage conservation in comparison to that for natural and Indigenous heritage has been commented on consistently by the National Cultural Heritage Forum and National Trusts.

In considering responses to conserving historic heritage places, the amount of development applications and referrals to state and territory heritage agencies should be considered; some annual reports indicate the large volume of such work in attempting to protect the heritage values of places. In New South Wales in 2003–04, 226 applications for significant changes to heritage places were processed, including 63 archaeology excavation permits and 70 development applications (an increase of 35 per cent since 2002–03). Some 165 exemptions for minor works and 79 archaeological exemptions were granted (a 51 per cent increase since 2002–03). In Western Australia there were 775 development applications referred to the Heritage Council. In Victoria, there were 41 archaeological consents in 2003–04 as the amount of survey work has doubled over the last four years. The number and nature of

approvals being given to alter and demolish places is between 400 and 500 permits each year for 2000 places on the Victorian Heritage Register, which shows that these places are being used and altered at an average rate of about 25 per cent each year. While some of the permits are for very minor things, the majority are for major works. The Heritage Division of the Australian Department of Environment and Heritage has had 311 projects referred to it between January 2004 and May 2005 for comment on protecting heritage values under provisions of the amended EPBC Act (David Young, pers. comm.).

In response to the *SoE2001*, which found that there was no comprehensive information available on the condition and integrity of Australia's historic heritage, the EPHC established a taskforce in May 2002 to examine incentives and other policy tools to promote heritage conservation. Its February 2004 report, *Making Heritage Happen* (EPHC 2004), examines 11 main tools: tax incentives, grants and loans, planning incentives and other planning instruments; heritage agreements; revolving funds and conservation trusts; encouraging use of heritage properties; technical assistance; labour and volunteers; recognition and promotion; client and customer relationships; and government to government assistance.

The report noted that the precise rate of demolition occurring nationwide in Australia cannot be stated with confidence. Even so, based on local government evidence, the 'continuation of current trends could lead to the loss by 2024 of 10–15 per cent of the heritage places that are extant in 2004'. Australia's public investment in incentives for historic heritage conservation compares unfavourably with many countries, particularly in North America and Western Europe (EPHC 2004, pp. 2, 39).

Recognising the disparity between the policy framework and incentives for the conservation of natural heritage and that for built historic heritage, the Australian Government in April 2005 requested the Productivity Commission to undertake an inquiry into conservation of our historic built heritage places and report back within 12 months. The wide-ranging inquiry examined policy and programme approaches. The substantive and commercial value of heritage places to the Australian economy has not been adequately analysed. While the wider community needs to feel that they own this 'resource', they also should be aware that it has sustainable worth in this neo-economic rationalist era, and that further diminution of the aesthetic, iconographic, educational, community, research and commercial values is essentially short-changing a distinctively Australian asset.

The level of investment in heritage conservation goes well beyond the funds delivered by government programmes and includes a substantial level of private investment. Heritage Victoria collects data on the estimated cost of works at the time it receives applications for permits, but this has never been aggregated into a reportable form. The Productivity Commission noted that 'information is not readily available, nor easily discernible ... for the financial value of the heritage estate and the value of works undertaken on heritage properties. There are either large gaps in the coverage or the data come with much qualification' (PC 2005, p. 35). Its survey of local government showed that around 50 per cent of responding

councils (about 315) provided assistance, ranging from 15 per cent of councils in Queensland to more than 80 per cent in New South Wales, and that free heritage advisory services and grants were the main form of assistance (PC 2005, pp. 34, 232–6).

Choice modelling showed that people are willing to pay a significant sum for improved heritage outcomes in Australia; a scenario involving a measured tightening of development controls and an increase in the number of heritage listings yields a willingness-to-pay of \$105.90 per person per year. When aggregated to the national population aged 18 years or older, this (gross benefit) value equates to \$1.6 billion per year (The Allen Consulting Group, 2005, pp. ix–x).

Table 8: Funds for historic heritage conservation work varied across the nation

State	Programme
NSW	Heritage Incentives Program: \$2.4 million per annum Heritage Asset Maintenance Program: \$2 million Centenary Stonework Program: \$4.5 million, plus contributory funding by occupying agencies of \$2 million
Victoria	Capital works for conservation of heritage places: \$4.5 million allocated for 2003-05* Heritage places 'at risk' fund: \$250 000 for urgent conservation works to 14 places in 2003–04 'Hands on Heritage': \$30 000 grant to Conservation Volunteers Australia for assistance to owners of 28 heritage places, equivalent to 971 days of support
Tasmania	Public historic sites (excluding Port Arthur) funding (\$1 326 000 expended from 2001–02 to 2004–05); Heritage Council Heritage Fund
South Australia	May 2004: additional \$2.9 million over next four years for local heritage, review and rationalisation of management of 42 state-owned heritage buildings currently cared for by the National Trust (SA), and for new heritage information and interpretation programmes
Western Australia	Grant funds: averaged \$435 000 from 2000–01 to 2004–05, included 64 low interest loans to 20 participating local councils and 36 interpretation grants
Queensland	No Community Cultural Heritage Incentive Program after 2003.
Northern Territory	From 2004–05, the Northern Territory government has provided \$1.0 million per annum for repair and maintenance of government-owned heritage places

Source: Annual reports of state and territory heritage agencies

* This programme builds on the highly successful Victorian Public Heritage Program of 1999–2003, in which overall investment has been three times the amount provided through the programme.

Trends are as follows:

- There has been a decline in Commonwealth historic heritage funding compared with funding through the Natural Heritage Trust. This is not appropriate given the increasing overlap of natural and cultural values being recognised by community stakeholders, who are managing places at a landscape scale.
- Funding available in all categories is grossly insufficient for the demand: less than one fifth of the required amount was available in Queensland since 2000 (EPA 2003) and the New South Wales Heritage Incentives Program is typically oversubscribed by a ratio of 12:1.
- The number and amount of grants increased in New South Wales, while Victorian Government annual allocations decreased from \$5 million in 2000–01 to \$4 million in 2003–05 and \$2 million in 2005–06.
- An atmosphere of economic restraint within government has meant that heritage is being measured increasingly through its capacity to deliver economic outcomes. There appears to be a growing resistance to measures that might impinge on economic growth, as measured by the increasing number of ‘permits to destroy’ that were issued by state and territory agencies—most in urban renewal or pipeline developments—from 20 in 1995–2000 (in all states?) to 124 in four states only in 2004–March 2005.

Response to conserve Indigenous heritage

Since 2001, Victoria has allocated \$2.1 million annually to community-based programmes for Aboriginal cultural heritage management and this has ensured Indigenous involvement. In March 2005, the Tasmanian government handed back to Indigenous ownership two long-contested islands in Bass Strait. Western Australia doubled funds to heritage agencies for Indigenous places to \$2 million during the reporting period. Joint management, direct ownership, leaseback and hand-back arrangements have all increased.

Indigenous land use agreements (ILUAs)—voluntary agreements about the use and management of an area of land or waters made between one or more native title groups and other parties, such as miners, pastoralists and governments (Godden and Dorsett 2001; Lane 2001)—have increased steadily from six in 2000 to 135 in September 2004, 80 of which were in Queensland and 55 per cent included cultural heritage provisions. A register of ILUAs was established under section 199A of the *Native Title Act 1998*, containing information about each registered ILUA. Evidence indicates that strong agreements are emerging, involving ‘substantial financial payments ... extensive and detailed employment and training provisions, provide for Indigenous involvement in environmental management and have cultural heritage provisions that exceed legislative requirements’ (O’Faircheallaigh 2004, p. 8).

The Indigenous organisations survey reported that involvement, particularly with Elders and outside agencies, was insufficient to ensure the protection of heritage. Consultation often did not happen at all, or it was too late. Funding was inadequate and uncertain for legal representation to fight inappropriate developments, for long-term planning of heritage maintenance and for cultural centres, computer databases to record heritage artefacts and sites. State heritage Acts were inadequate to protect Indigenous heritage. Victorian Government programmes allow ‘organisations to speak for country’, which the Yorta Yorta community believe is more appropriately the responsibility of the Elders Council and not ‘an homogenised group of people with no spiritual or physical connection to the country’ (Open Mind Research Group 2005, p. 19). This sentiment was echoed by a number of organisations. The ability of Indigenous communities to nominate sites, places and landscapes to the new National List through Indigenous reference groups is severely constrained by under-resourcing and structural marginalisation.

Most native title representative bodies considered their funding was too narrowly defined and failed to recognise the links existing between cultural heritage, land management and native title. Complementary opportunities were lost; for example, acceptable land use and Indigenous values could be documented together rather than the present separate determinations. The Kimberley Land Council believes that funding for Native Title is inadequate to resolve all the outstanding land claims and allow Indigenous communities to proceed with looking after their heritage (Open Mind Research Group 2005).

Existing and emergent Indigenous natural resource management, cultural heritage management and governance initiatives appear to now fall into state, territory and local government policy vacuums just as they are developing successful community and business plans (see AIATSIS 2004). Stage 2 has just begun profiling successful Indigenous local organisations. While the World Heritage co-management structures are to be applauded, they are small in content and personnel on the ground. Through regional agreements and ILUAs, industry has really undertaken co-management, training and capacity-building tasks seriously.

Repatriation of cultural material to communities from national museums and collecting institutions has continued. Indigenous involvement in managing cultural centres, keeping places, and heritage tourism has also expanded across Australia.

Trends are as follows:

- There has been increased involvement of Indigenous people in managing traditional lands through IPAs, ILUAs, park employment and working for resource industries.
- Cross-cultural training and training for site recording continued to increase.
- Problems persist with processes for community consultation in development planning applications and funding heritage conservation.

Responses to conserve heritage collections

Conservation treatment offers the greatest potential for the development of strategies and solutions across sectors responsible for movable collections (archives, galleries, libraries, and museums). Environmentally controlled storage is required, particularly for collections in regions experiencing extremes of climate. Access to in-person, affordable expert conservation advice and training in conservation, with an emphasis on low-cost options for preventive conservation, is a priority in regions and in metropolitan small museums, galleries and local archives. The pool of Australian conservation experts needs to be replenished and maintained for these tasks.

Custodians of scientific collections highlighted the special conservation needs for scientific ‘type’ collections (which include genetic material). This is material of unique economic and scientific importance, not only in the context of heritage collections but also for the wider science research community and government. Neglect presents a high risk to the natural and cultural heritage of Australia (Deakin University 2002, pp. 104–5).

No detailed data were provided to analyse trends in funding for state, territory and local museums and archives, which are the major repositories of heritage collections. An aggregate report, *Cultural Funding in Australia: Three Tiers of Government 2001–2002* (ABS 2003), shows the predominance of natural heritage funding (\$900.7 million to national parks) over museum funding (\$266.3 million).

State arts agencies generally fund the operation of their state museum and small regional museums, as well as providing outreach services and grants for conservation or exhibition programmes, which often used heritage collections. In some jurisdictions, funding data during the reporting period show wide variations due to completion of Centenary of Federation new building projects or new millennium building initiatives.

Trends are as follows:

- There is a continuing inability to delineate heritage objects and collections from the total holdings of most collecting institutions except public archives, which by definition are heritage collections.
- Conservation treatments for heritage objects and environmentally controlled storage in places of climate extreme remain a priority.
- Intangible cultural heritage conservation needs a focus by establishing policies and principles given issues of intellectual property, moral rights and commercialisation of the humanities and social sciences in academia.

Changes in heritage legislation

There have been many changes to national, state and territory legislation during the last five years. The amendments to the EPBC Act and the *Australian Heritage Council Act 2003*

ushered in a new era in national heritage protection. Commonwealth agencies are now required to actively manage their heritage places and the creation of a National Heritage Places list provides an opportunity for all Australians to reconsider the heritage values in those places to tell a more layered and richer story about Australia.

In many states, changes to national park and protected areas legislation transferred state forests to park reservations, as shown in the statistics for increased areas of reserved lands. The trend to separate legislation for nature conservation from that for parks and reserve management continued, with new legislation in 2002 in Tasmania (Table 9).

Table 9: Changes to Australia's heritage legislation in the states and territories

State or Territory	Legislative changes
ACT	The <i>Heritage Act 2004</i> covers natural, historic, Indigenous places and heritage objects
Victoria	The <i>Heritage Act 1995</i> was amended in 2004 to enable the listing of significant heritage objects in their own right; to reflect the 'Protecting Our Suburbs' policy by enforcing tougher penalties for those breaching heritage and planning permits Since 2002 more active enforcement has led to successful prosecutions in the Magistrates Court
Queensland	The <i>Queensland Heritage Act 1992</i> was amended in 2003, and incorporated into the <i>Integrated Planning Act 1997</i> to bring assessment of privately-owned heritage registered places into the Integrated Development Assessments System, to enable listing of precincts or streetscapes and to protect historical archaeological areas Indigenous cultural heritage is now covered by entirely new legislation
Western Australia	Draft Heritage Bill 2003 has been prepared but not released Significant increases to penalties under section 57 of Indigenous heritage legislation for damage or disturbance to sites
South Australia	Issues paper canvassed updating statutory provisions for heritage protection
Northern Territory	The <i>Heritage Conservation Act 1991</i> review was launched in early 2004; the minister acknowledged legislation was out-of-date and unable to protect Territory icons such as the Hotel Darwin, old Supreme Court and some World War II sites, as well as considering Indigenous sites as only archaeological and ignoring natural heritage features of living culture

Changes to Indigenous heritage legislation in Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia appear to emphasise contemporary (social) significance and empower local and

regional Indigenous bodies; however, there are inadequate structures, resources and training for this effective transfer of ‘power’ to be successful. In effect, the quality of overall heritage protection and mitigation afforded has diminished, despite increased levels of consultation, survey and key performance indicators such as completed reports and s90 and s18 permits. In the post-native title era many state agencies appear to be giving near-equal value to any interested parties in the heritage identification, assessment and consent stages. This is to abrogate a core responsibility to register and assess the content of heritage (and heritage stakeholders) with respect to both historic and contemporary associations. This is now manifested in examples of 35 overlapping claims known from the Western Australian Goldfields in the 1990s; in 18 concurrent groups being recognised by Department of Environment and Conservation in the Hunter Valley in cultural heritage surveys, assessment of values and subsequent protection and consent processes. This has caused a conundrum for local government, land users and managers as many of these non-mediated processes are now entering litigation. The cost to the public in New South Wales would be in the tens of millions of dollars—and arguably often with compromised heritage outcomes. There is a clear need for professional natural and cultural heritage moderators and mediators to be involved at these early stages of ratification of the identification and assessment process.¹

Trends are as follows:

- Much activity has been expended over the last five years in revising and updating heritage legislation across most jurisdictions.
- Increased enforcement has resulted in a higher profile for heritage conservation in some parts of the nation.
- Indigenous heritage protection has diminished in quality, while increasing in coverage, consultation and reporting and overlapping claims.

Expertise and skills for managing heritage

This section provides an understanding of training and participation in the heritage fields, including the number of people being trained in heritage management and conservation, those working in heritage agencies, with community groups, or participating in professional heritage organisations.

The number of professional employees in Commonwealth heritage agencies and Commonwealth managers of heritage places (such as Defence properties) has varied reflecting budget restrictions on staffing and policies of outsourcing to consultants. There have also been decreases in Queensland, while conversely increases in South Australia, Western Australia and Victoria. It is not known how many staff are professional graduates in disciplines like architecture, history, ecology or archaeology rather than general managers. The continuing decline in practical conservation skills in both the trades and the professions

¹ Personal communication, Dr Peter Veth, AIATSIS, 9 July 2005.

and the lack of training programmes has been noted by heritage agencies and New South Wales is addressing this as a priority. The small size of the Australian heritage market is seen as a contributing to the difficulty in maintaining a critical mass of specific heritage trades and skills (PC 2005, p. 18).

The provision of heritage advisors to local government in all states and territories, except Queensland and the Northern Territory, has resulted in cost-effective delivery of heritage conservation outcomes to local councils, property owners and managers. Across the nation, this huge increase from 2000 in coverage of heritage advisory services, generally using part-time advisors, shows the continuing conservation effort at the local level to protect a wide variety of built historic heritage. Despite the interest in national heritage as exemplified by the ninetieth anniversary in 2005 of the Anzac landing at Gallipoli, it is at the local government level that there is an urgent need for incentives and skills to protect heritage—an irony at a time of unprecedented wealth and affluence created in part by and seen in building development.

Membership of peak professional heritage organizations has remained static over the reporting period, despite the availability of graduates from the increased number of courses described in 2001. At January 2006 there were 14 universities across Australia offering 40 courses in cultural heritage subjects.

The number of Indigenous people employed in heritage conservation activities is partly a measure of use of skills and expertise that is distinct from direct economic employment. The numbers in government agencies are very small, with little increase since 2001, the exception being Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, which has maintained 12 Indigenous staff of its 23 staff over the period. Resource industries are employing increasing numbers, for example, Hamersley/RIO has 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage officers.

The Indigenous organisations survey reported a lack of skills amongst the Indigenous population to professionally manage protection of heritage sites; there are very few Indigenous archaeologists, cultural monitors, or heritage or cultural officers. Legal skills are required to represent Indigenous heritage interests and values where local government and developer interests conflict with Indigenous community interests.

The use of volunteers has increased, especially in museum and historic house management in cataloguing collections and guiding visitors to heritage places. This trend is also observed in physical conservation works such as those undertaken by 'Hands on Heritage' teams. The National Trusts are almost all reliant on approximately 7000 volunteers, but the management of heritage places is dependant on volunteers who are ageing and subject to new occupational health and safety requirements and public risk insurances. This group is opting for a more active lifestyle in retirement and therefore has the potential to significantly swell volunteer numbers in the next decade.

In Western Australia, the Department of Indigenous Affairs has appointed 40 honorary wardens under s.50 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* to assist with site protection. There is no data for other states or territories.

Trends are as follows:

- Professional employment opportunities are static, despite the needs.
- There is a low participation rate by Indigenous people in professional heritage management.
- Heritage managers are reliant on volunteers.

Community awareness of heritage

This section examines issues related to what the community sees as matters of concern for their heritage.

Different members of the community engage with their heritage in different ways and this needs to be understood and respected. Young people find their own ways of engaging with heritage, as do many ethnic groups. Heritage can make the past tangible and bring diverse people together to tell their stories. It is part of local and community identity and connects social groups. Sustainable tourism at cultural and natural heritage places may result from sharing these local stories and maintaining the authenticity of the historic environment and its knowledge and traditions.

All forms of media—print, visual arts, performing arts, television, radio and Internet—have built greater community appreciation of heritage as demonstrated by many programmes across Australia during the reporting period. Travelling exhibitions also highlight unknown aspects of heritage, such as the 2002 Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery's *Creating a Gothic Paradise—Pugin at the Antipodes*, which presented works of Pugin, the famous English designer of the Victorian Gothic Revival (Tasmania has one of the great collections of Victorian Gothic Revival, mostly churches and objects).

Media reporting of heritage issues concentrated mostly on local issues (related to conflicts often over development applications), and stories (related to historical anniversaries, descendants of those involved and associated commemorations). Media reporting of issues at the national, state and territory levels seems to result from top-down ministerial or agency press releases, with a possible follow-up with reporting of community response and action. This is probably balanced by the bottom-up reporting of local heritage issues through local newspapers and radio.

National Trust Heritage Week festivals in every state and territory continue to be the focus of peak publicity and openings of heritage places. Many other festivals feature local heritage as part of an established arts or promotion event. Commemoration of historic events raises

awareness, such as that in 2001–03 for the bicentennial of Matthew Flinders circumnavigation of Australia, which touched many places and local communities as ‘ports of call’.

2004 was the Year of the Built Environment, and many agencies highlighted the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings with environmental, social and economic benefits. This theme appeared in guidelines publications and special issues of heritage magazines.

Community awareness is raised by networking places according to heritage themes, such as transport to tell a story, for example, the Cobb and Co Heritage Trail from Bathurst to Bourke, or the Great North Road (a convict trail in New South Wales), or the Goldfields Trail in Victoria. The Queensland Heritage Trails network was established to celebrate the centenary of Federation and, with other themed trails, are part of the heritage tourism strategies that some agencies have been promoting in conjunction with their State Tourism agencies.

Membership of peak heritage organizations remains at about the same level as in 2001. National Trust membership is some 72 200 members for all branches. They employ a volunteer work force of 7400 and manage 253 properties, some 170 of which are open to the public (PC 2005, p. xviii). The Federation of Australian Historical Societies <<http://www.history.org.au>> estimates the total number of societies at approximately 1000, with between 25 000 and 40 000 individual members, although the total population involved in community history activities could be as high as 100 000.

It has become customary across Australia since 2000 to open major festivals, conferences and cultural events with a ‘welcome to country’ by the traditional owners of that place; and many meetings open with the chair acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which the meeting is being held. This has contributed significantly to raising public awareness of the diverse number of Indigenous groups across Australia each with their own language and customs, which have given each locality a distinct identity. The phenomenal rise in popularity of Indigenous artwork has also led to public awareness of regional differences in styles and stories. Debates over attribution (intellectual property and moral rights) have increased awareness of traditional and gendered rights to tell stories of the Dreaming.

Market research in 2004–05 evaluated the *Distinctively Australian* advertising campaign, which introduced the new national heritage system. Quantitative testing found that 54 per cent of Australians are interested in finding out more about Australian heritage. Interest in natural places, events and stories is highest amongst the general public in comparison with cultural and Indigenous places, events and stories. Women are consistently more likely than men to be interested in all three heritage areas, while older people are more interested than younger people, and 71 per cent of Australians support the new National Heritage List.

The research found evidence of a deep interest in discussing, exploring, understanding and ‘creating’ heritage in Australia and a desire among participants to ‘feel’ connected to something larger. There were strong indications that the ‘stories’ and the values

communicated by, or associated with places (as well as places themselves) may be a powerful and productive way of exploring these ideas and issues. While the National Heritage List is seen as a useful legislative instrument by stakeholders, other means are required for facilitating a national conversation about heritage with the general public, old and young (Colmar Brunton Social Research 2005, p. 2).

The National Trust's *Endangered Places* List

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.au/endangered_places.htm> was launched in 1998 as a reaction to concerns that heritage places remained threatened before they can be given statutory protection. While the list has no legal authority, it has been persuasive in making the relevant authorities respond to community concerns. The National Trust has also launched its Heritage Icons programmes—people's choice of familiar items of cultural heritage. In Queensland the 2004 choices included the backyard mango tree, Bundy rum, Mr Fourex (a beer label), goanna oil, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Southern Cross windmills and 'Hey' with a silent 'H'. This broadening of heritage to include items and language relating to specific regions also supports a distinctively Australian approach.

The National Heritage Chairs and Officials, from Australia and New Zealand, commissioned research into community views and perceptions of a range of heritage values. Indirect benefits ranked more highly than direct use values and of the 2024 adults in the sample, 92 per cent agreed that 'heritage is part of Australia's identity'. Heritage education for children, protection of heritage places, and recognising historic houses as part of area character and identity also ranked highly (The Allen Consulting Group 2005, pp. 26–7).

Trends are as follows:

- General awareness of the heritage of local places has increased.
- Community involvement continues in heritage festivals and cultural events.
- The non-Indigenous community knows little of the detailed Indigenous heritage of an area.
- Tourism is using local heritage and regional identity as both product and marketing in its promotions.

Conclusion

Heritage places and objects continue to play a role in the lives of most Australians as these places have natural, historic and Indigenous values in them and their surrounding landscapes. In contrast, the culture–nature split remains entrenched in community understanding and most heritage legislation. The breadth of heritage activity has broadened beyond places to incorporate intangible heritage—language, oral tradition, crafts skills and performing arts.

Over the reporting period, the following trends have emerged:

- Despite the enactment of the long awaited reformed national heritage system, stakeholders believe that heritage is ‘off the political agenda’ and replaced by broader environmental issues like water supply, salinity and revegetation in these times of continuing variable climate, which, in turn, are highlighted in the national research priorities.
- The Natural Heritage Trust dominates the government funding agenda and reinforces the ‘green’ or natural heritage as the naming of the trust has created a discourse in which the word ‘heritage’ is a continually repeated component linked to nature. This privileges a particular perception of heritage in which the namers created a value and a management objective that has meant exclusion of human processes that result in cultural landscape values.
- Tertiary education continues in academic ‘silos’ and this is reinforced by conservation training programmes that are based on separate heritage disciplines.
- Historic houses that are listed on heritage registers have generally been maintained because of private-owner preference, their niche real estate value, and the period restoration business serving their renovation and maintenance.
- Former government-owned heritage properties have lost heritage values and integrity where they have been redeveloped for new uses, particularly in urban redevelopment such as inner-city post offices.
- Public funding for historic built heritage conservation has declined.
- There has been an increase in non-Anglo histories of places as Australia’s multicultural, post-war generation retires and records their memoirs of arrival and living in Australia, and as Australians recognise the wartime issues of alien internment and sixtieth anniversaries associated with the end of World War II.
- Developers and governments are increasingly recognising that Indigenous people must be consulted about issues affecting their lands, heritage and connection to country.
- There is continuing interest by Australians in Aboriginal art forms, music and oral narratives as intangible heritage and promotion of that as part of national identity.

New issues are as follows:

- While there has been increasing recognition of the cultural landscape concept as a tool for integrating and managing all heritage interests in a place, there are a variety of definitions in use across Australia in some local government planning scheme overlays and in public land plans of management, but there has been very little actual on-ground management.
- For the new National Heritage List introduced in January 2004, there is popular misunderstanding of thresholds given the range of current nominations and the fact that many are of local value and overwhelmingly historic places; the diminished role of the

Australian Heritage Council as an advisory ministerial committee does not assist public education about heritage.

- The delineation of values at different thresholds in a place leads to different management responses but, it is hoped, an integrated management of the heritage place, for example, the Royal Exhibition Buildings, Melbourne.
- Intangible heritage—associations with and meanings about heritage, as defined in the amended Burra Charter 1999—has been given more legitimacy with the UNESCO Convention on Intangible Heritage 2003; however, who is to judge whether beliefs are valid?
- Lack of history teaching and therefore of heritage awareness, its physical remains and intangible associations, in school environmental studies and social studies curricula remains an issue.
- Australia has an urban and suburban dominant culture, yet the myth of the outback as ‘our heart’ persists, while ignorance prevails of selection-era land use patterns being obliterated by closer subdivision, the development ironically of ‘country houses’ on urban edges and coastal sprawl.
- Museum object ‘deification’ *per se* continues compared with using objects as props for storytelling about layers of meaning and history in the place where the object was initially located.
- Integrity of heritage landscapes is threatened in the face of transforming developments like wind farms.

The very high risks being experienced by these non-renewable heritage resources must be given an adequate voice through specialist advisory bodies to the various ministers overseeing heritage legislatures. There has been a demonstrable decline in the independence, leverage and professional composition of these committees over the last ten years. This is partly a result of a nationally conservative approach, where the chauvinism of European encounter is paramount, despite acknowledging Indigenous connection to country; this is then coupled with the deregulatory thrust of state and territory governments who are keen to ensure that their economic credentials remain untrammelled by industry lobbyists. Neither parallel trajectory serves to provide a balanced approach to optimal heritage management. A shared heritage requires public and private partnerships at all levels, public engagement and continuing education.

Heritage conservation in Australia is at a turning point. Heritage values have changed over the last 30 years since the *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975* was passed, in response to changed attitudes, educational standards, technology, economy and demography. As is consistent with the COAG Agreement in 1997, the Australian Government has focused on places of national significance and places owned by the Commonwealth as reflected in the 2003 amendments to the EPBC Act. The relationship between the Australian Government’s

heritage administration and state and territory jurisdictions has been formally established through the National Heritage Protocol (September 2003). Better integration of the new arrangements with state and territory processes across all areas of heritage conservation still remains the most active requirement. A national policy framework is needed to attain the economic and social benefits of Australia's heritage assets. Heritage is still regarded as being 'special places' rather than as a range of values that are found throughout the environment and encompassing stories, traditions and community associations.

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Appendix 1

2006 State of Environment indicators for heritage

Core Indicator 1: Knowledge of Heritage

- NCH_1 Process of listing, area and distribution of identified natural heritage places
- NCH_2 Process of listing, number and distribution of conservation agreements
- NCH_3 Number of places on the new national heritage list and Australia's World Heritage properties list
- NCH_4 Process of listing, number and distribution of Indigenous heritage listings
Sub Indicators will include those for Indigenous Languages (The outcomes of the Survey of Indigenous Languages being conducted by AIATSIS provide the data for these indicators)
- NCH_5 Process of listing, number and distribution of identified heritage places
- NCH_6 Process of listing, number and distribution of significant heritage objects (contingent on nature of data from the DOCITA survey)

Core Indicator 2: Physical Condition and Integrity of Heritage

- NCH_7 Physical condition and integrity of a sample of natural heritage places
- NCH_8 Physical condition and integrity of a sample of historic heritage places
- NCH_9 Physical condition and integrity of a sample of Indigenous heritage places
- NCH_10 Physical condition and integrity of a sample of heritage collections (contingent on nature of data from the DOCITA survey)

Core Indicator 3: Responses to conserve heritage

- NCH_11 Funds provided to heritage and other agencies for natural heritage places
- NCH_12 Funds provided to heritage and other agencies for historic heritage places
- NCH_13 Funds provided to heritage and other agencies for Indigenous heritage
- NCH_14 Funds provided to heritage and other agencies for heritage collections
- NCH_15 Changes in natural heritage legislation
- NCH_16 Changes in historic heritage legislation
- NCH_17 Changes in Indigenous heritage legislation
- NCH_18 Changes in heritage collections legislation

Core Indicator 4: Expertise and Skills for Managing Heritage

- NCH_19 Number and distribution of professional heritage-related courses, enrolments and graduates
- NCH_20 Membership of selected peak professional heritage associations (including Australia ICOMOS, Museums Australia and AICCM)
- NCH_21 Number of volunteers trained by heritage organisations and institutions
- NCH_22 Number of people working in Indigenous organisations, number of Indigenous enrolments in university heritage courses, number of Indigenous people employed by agencies involved in Indigenous programmes and management of Indigenous heritage
- NCH_23 Number of local government heritage advisors
- NCH_24 Number of professional heritage employees in government agencies

Core Indicator 5: Community Awareness of Heritage

- NCH_25 Community awareness indicators – to be determined by DEH.

(Source: Tender 1/2005DEH, Natural and Cultural Heritage theme commentary for the 2006 *Australian State of the Environment Report*)