

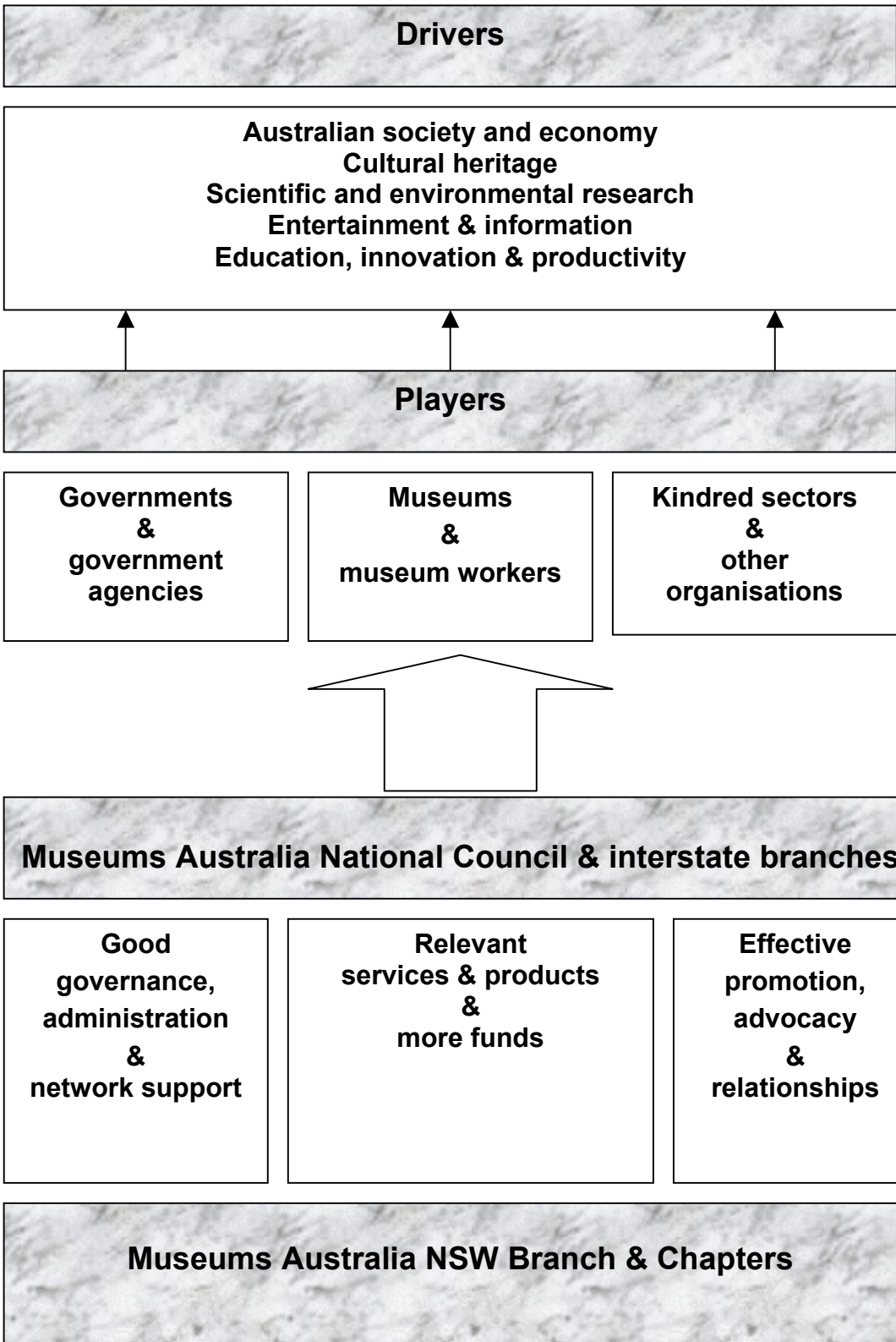
# **[ Museums Australia ]**

New South Wales

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2011**

Version 1.5  
2 March 2009

**IN A NUTSHELL**



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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## **Museum needs and issues**

Museums and collections sector needs were identified in the 2001 report *Key Needs of Collecting Institutions in the Heritage Sector*. Since then, relevant issues have been further influenced by three trends: the evolving roles of museum sector players; the converging use of the Internet and technology by museums, galleries, libraries and archives; the publication, in 2008, of *the National Standard for Australian Museum and Galleries* and the scheduled publication of *Significance* in 2009.

## **Government policy and funding**

The museum sector receives most of its money from governments. The Cultural Ministers Council (CMC), as the nation's coordinating body for Australian and state ministers with responsibility for museums, has flagged its priorities for the next five years. The Rudd Government, and to some extent the NSW Government, are placing increasing emphasis on the values of society over market forces. But the pendulum has swung at a time of acute economic pressure.

## **Museums Australia's direction**

Museums Australia has the following goals 2008–2011: effective advocacy; successful positioning of MA as the representative sectoral body; organisational renewal to link the sector nationally; and strengthening the association's capacity.

## **NSW Branch performance 2006-2008 and lessons learned**

After presenting the successful national conference in 2005, the branch has focused efforts on supporting the work of chapters through a number of strategies, establishing a regular program of events in Sydney and advocating on behalf of museums and museum workers. It has made no ground on increasing the number of members, a strategy that largely depends on a concerted action by the national body and its divisions.

## **NSW Branch goals and strategies 2009-2011**

- To strengthen the branch and its networks through effective governance, administration and network support.
- To develop and maintain member services and products by contributing to efforts to increase members and funds at national, state and regional levels, facilitating professional development and providing other benefits.
- To promote NSW branch and chapter needs to the national council, governments, government agencies, museums, museum workers and other organisations.
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## 2. CONTEXTS

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In recent years, the New South Wales Branch of Museums Australia has developed and implemented a number of strategic plans revolving around the provision of services, professional development, network development, branch operations and relationships with other organisations.

### 2.1 Museum needs and key issues

In 2001, *Key Needs of Collecting Institutions in the Heritage Sector* identified a range of issues for further attention by the museum sector: (1) documentation; (2) conservation; (3) interpretation; (4) professional development; (5) R&D and marketing; (6) quality and consistency; (7) recognition of professional isolation and diversity; and (8) a perceived lack of nation-wide coordination. [See further details appendix 1]. Since then, these needs have been further influenced by three trends:

- The evolving roles of museum sector players. Governments continue to provide the major proportion of income earned by museums. Government funded agencies such as Collections Council of Australia, Museums & Galleries NSW and Museums & Galleries Services Queensland have been established as preferred intermediaries for distribution of government funds in some jurisdictions. Questions have emerged about the roles of professional associations and major institutions.
- Converging use of the Internet and technology by museums, galleries, libraries and archives. NSW Government policy on this front is a patchwork and has tended to focus on integration of facilities. Museums Australia needs to lead its members through a more complex environment, one laced with great opportunities.
- The publication in 2008 of the National Standard for Australian Museum and Galleries was a major step in encouraging more consistent adoption of standards in running museums and galleries. The publication of a new edition of Significance in 2009 will be another important tool for developing relevant policies and strategies by all players. Both of these standards will need constant revision.

### 2.2 Government policy and funding museums

Government policy and funding is the main factor in the future of museums. The election in 2007 of the Rudd Government has signalled policy shifts in important areas. Others — such as a strategic direction for the digital economy — are due for release. The plans of Government-funded agencies will have a bearing on future association efforts.

The Cultural Ministers Council (CMC) is the nation's coordinating body for Australian and state ministers with responsibility for museums. In 2008, the CMC renewed funding framework for the Collections Council of Australia 2009-2010 and flagged other priority areas for the next five years, including the transformation of cultural spaces, assets and collections, digital and virtual environments, arts and cultural infrastructure facilities.

NSW policy and funding for museums is out of step with new realities, which are to some extent driven by the converging use of technology.

### **2.3 Museums Australia's direction**

Museums Australia's national council outlined its strategic direction in February 2008. This summarised the changing environment. It noted opportunities for advocacy at all levels of government. It suggested the following as the key policy challenges and opportunities for museums:

- Education. With renewed focus on national approaches to education, museums and galleries have an opportunities to champion the value they contribute directly to education.
- Economic and social development of communities. Museums, historical societies, art centres and local community networks have opportunities for synergistic initiatives to support heritage and other issues attuned to 'equity of opportunity' across the nation.
- Digital economy and the global information society. The museums sector is increasingly challenged to provide access to its unique resources as part of the digital economy.

The national council will be pursuing the following strategic goals 2008 – 2011

- Effective advocacy.
- Successful positioning of MA as the representative sectoral body.
- Organisational renewal to link the sector nationally.
- Strengthening the association's capacity.

### **2.4 NSW branch performance 2006-2008**

In developing plans for the next three years, the NSW Branch committee reviewed its achievements in the past three years, which were guided by its strategic plan 2006-2008.

It noted the commitment of the branch committee and chapter members, the efforts of the branch committee to provide support to chapters, new changes to the constitution that provide more flexibility in establishing and running chapters, the launch of the IMAGinE Awards in partnership with other organisations, the implementation of regular Sydney events, endeavours to improve the quality of *Museum Matters*, and an increased level of advocacy work.

On the other hand, the branch has not been able to increase the number of members. This is an issue that needs more thorough consideration by the national council, the NSW branch and chapters as part of more detailed business and/or marketing plans. The branch committee also believes emphasis should be given in 2009-2011 to strengthening its alliances with other organisations such as the Collections Council of Australia, Regional Arts NSW, Museums & Galleries NSW, Royal Australian Historical Society, Regional & Public Galleries Association NSW, and Local Government & Shires Associations of NSW.

### 3. NSW BRANCH GOALS AND STRATEGIES 2009-2011

#### 3.1 Goals

- To strengthen the branch and its networks through good governance, administration and network support.
- To develop and maintain member services and products by contributing to efforts to increase membership at national, state and regional levels, facilitating professional development and providing other benefits.
- To promote NSW branch and chapter needs to the national council, governments, government agencies, Museums Australia members and other organisations.

#### 3.2 Good governance, administration & network support

Strengthen the branch through good governance, administration and network support. Maintain the branch office as 7-day a week operation and improve overall branch and chapter efficiency with the aim of minimising effort, where possible, and maximising the impact of the efforts of those making significant voluntary contributions to the association.

<b>National governance &amp; operations</b>	<b>National council &amp; office</b>	Contribute to plans, policies and activities of national council	Ongoing
	<b>Interstate branches</b>	Liaise with interstate branches with a view to capitalising on their efforts	Ongoing
<b>NSW Branch</b>	<b>Plans</b>	Complete strategic plan 2009-2011.	Feb 2009
		Complete strategic plan 2012-2014.	Feb 2012
	<b>Committee &amp; executive officer</b>	Organise branch elections in 2009 & 2011. Recruit new members to the branch committee if and when needed.	Ongoing
		Hold 6 branch meetings annually to manage branch business.	Ongoing
		Review and renew executive officer contract with the national office.	Dec 2010
	<b>Research</b>	Undertake research in a number of areas, particularly those identified below.	Ongoing
		Complete and implement branch marketing plan to complement national strategies.	Jun 2010
		Complete branch history as a web-based chronology	Dec 2009
	<b>Facilities &amp; equipment</b>	Renew agreement with PHM.	Ongoing

	<b>Finances</b>	Streamline branch and chapter planning, reporting, budgeting, auditing and administrative subsidy distribution.	Mar 2009
		Coordinate branch and chapter planning, reporting, budgeting, auditing and administrative subsidy distribution.	Ongoing
	<b>By-laws, policies &amp; procedures</b>	Complete new branch by-laws and communicate changes to chapters.	Mar 2009
		Complete branch office manual and distribute full or abbreviated version to chapter representatives as a possible model for managing their affairs.	Dec 2010
	<b>Records</b>	Complete and implement 3 phases of records management policy and strategy.	Dec 2010
<b>NSW Chapters</b>	<b>Annual reps meetings</b>	Organise annual Chapter representatives' meeting	Ongoing
	<b>Other support</b>	Complete Chapter Plan to assist in supporting chapters in a number of areas, including those identified below.	Mar 2009
		Assist those which currently experiencing operational difficulties to resolve their future. Chapters that have indicated need for support: Sydney, Golden West, Murray Riverina, South East, South West	Jun 2009
		Visit each chapter at least once 2009-2011.	Ongoing
		Contribute to creation of chapter profiles SH&I chapter	Jun 2009
		Contribute to profiles for those chapters wanting to develop them.	Dec 2010

### 3.3 Relevant services & products

Develop and maintain member services and products by contributing to efforts to increase association funds at national, state and regional levels, facilitating professional development and providing other benefits. Priorities include contributing to development of national business and/or marketing plans, contributing to improvements in the design, content and functionality of the MA website, and developing knowledge, skills and relationships through publications and events.

<b>Member enquiries</b>	<b>Phone &amp; email enquiries</b>	Maintain service in response to enquiries from members and non-members.	Ongoing
<b>Publications</b>	<b>Museum Matters</b>	Publish 2 issues annually. [PB,SS]	Ongoing

		Review quality, content and impact to differentiate the newsletter from other sources. [PB,SS]	Mar 2010
	<b>Museum Methods &amp; national standards</b>	Develop proposal for a new edition or alternative publications linked to the national standard and related initiatives. [SB, PB]	Jun 2010
	<b>Other publications</b>	Develop proposals for other publications to fill gaps in available information (suggestions made to date include tourism guidebook, list of conservators, advocacy pack). [SB]	Sep 2010
	<b>Website &amp; online publications / communication</b>	Develop and maintain site by (1) contributing to national plans; (2) reviewing branch and chapter pages as soon as the new national site is launched and (3) coordinating changes to pages and processes.	Ongoing
<b>Events</b>	<b>National conference</b>	Contribute to the success of the 2009 MA national conference being organised by the Hunter chapter in association with the national office and NSW branch.	Jun 2009
	<b>Sydney tours and talks</b>	Continue to implement Sydney tours and talks and other metropolitan events. [MC, SS, PB]	Ongoing
	<b>History week events</b>	Develop and implement proposal to participate in History Week in September each year. [PB,SS]	Ongoing
	<b>Regional events</b>	Promote regional seminars and workshops to members and respond to opportunities to support their implementation and growth.	Ongoing
	<b>Exhibitions</b>	Develop proposal for a collaborative exhibition showcasing regional collections. [SS]	Dec 2011
<b>Awards</b>	<b>IMAGinE awards</b>	Review inaugural awards and participate as a partner in future awards 2009-2011	Ongoing
	<b>ABC/MA regional museum awards</b>	Liaise with the national office re continued develop of awards 2009-2011.	Ongoing

### 3.4 Effective promotion, advocacy & relationships

Promote NSW museum and museum worker needs to the national council, governments, government agencies, other organisations and to the museum sector itself.

Specific issues that have been raised in recent discussions include: acquisition and use of IT hardware, software and training; providing information packages and services with guidance on management of volunteers, Indigenous programs and other topics; and promoting more effective data handling by museums.

The branch is preparing a submission to Arts NSW in response to a 2008 government report on the NSW cultural grants program and other government reports. An article on advocacy in the December 2008 issue of *Museum Matters* and recent articles by executive officer for the Australian publication *Online Currents* flag possible issues to be addressed in an advocacy plan.

<b>Plans</b>	<b>Advocacy plan</b>	Complete advocacy plan to promote MA Branch needs to the national council, governments, government agencies, other organisations and to the museum sector itself.	Apr 2009
<b>Committees &amp; liaison</b>	<b>MGNSW</b>	Contribute to MGNSW Museum Reference and Volunteer Reference committees. [GH, MB, RP].	Ongoing
	<b>Other organisations</b>	Liaise with RAHS, RANSW, RPGNSW, LGSA, CCA, ASA, ALIA and other organisations about converging issues that need attention.	Ongoing
<b>Submissions</b>	<b>Arts NSW</b>	Complete submission to Arts NSW about NSW policy and funding of museums.	Jun 2009
	<b>Collections Council of Australia</b>	Contribute to consultative processes when appropriate	Ongoing
	<b>Other surveys and inquiries</b>	Contribute to Government and non-Government inquiries and surveys when appropriate.	Ongoing

### 3.5 Supporting documents

Project plan appendix 2.

Budget available as separate document

# APPENDIX 1: AUSTRALIAN KEY NEEDS STUDY

## Executive summary

In the early 1990s two needs, access and preservation, provided the foundation for collaborative work on Australia's heritage collections. Those needs are still principal areas of concern for heritage collections across Australia. This study has conducted, first, an evaluation of some of the products and initiatives associated with the Heritage Collections Council's focus on helping to address those needs. Heritage collections need stability in the short-term, and sustainability for the long term.

## Key Needs

**1. Documentation.** It is clear from respondents in all areas that organizations have accepted their responsibility to make their collections as accessible as possible and are working towards this goal in a number of effective ways, principally through cataloguing, documentation, and associated delivery systems. Not surprisingly, therefore, reverberating loudly through all areas of the sector is the need for a sustained commitment to support the progress being made in these documentation endeavours.

**2. Conservation.** It is clear that organizations in all sectors now appreciate the importance of the conservation and preservation of heritage collection material. There is a major need for a sustained effort to ensure that preservation work proceeds, with due attention given to the specific characteristics of individual heritage collections, and to the integration of preventive and interventionist conservation treatments

**3. Interpretation.** It is also clear across Australia that organizations maintaining heritage collections believe they have a mission to not only preserve material and to make their collections and information accessible, but to use their expertise and resources to be active in the interpretation of their collections, in order to help meet society's needs for recreation and learning. There is a critical need across all areas therefore to ensure that current efforts to provide quality visitor experiences through

effective interpretation be sustained and developed.

**4. Professional Development** There is wide spread recognition and acceptance that workers in the sector increasingly face greater expectations of professionalism and public accountability, and this shift, along with technological change, is having a profound influence on the operations of heritage collections of all kinds. As a result there is an essential need for a sustained commitment to the professional development of heritage collection personnel.

**5. Wider understanding of heritage collections** There is an overarching need for better understanding of the heritage collections sector. Current public and industry perceptions about heritage collections are affecting the ability of the sector to achieve its potential.

**6. Quality and consistency.** There is widespread acceptance of the concepts of benchmarks, standards, and accreditation systems but these concepts are yet to be implemented for most heritage collections.

**7. Recognising professional isolation and respecting diversity**

**8. Perceived lack of nation-wide coordination.** Australian heritage collections are located in a wide range of institution types, in far-flung locations. The maintenance and management of these collections requires long-term commitment, and an integrated and strategic approach in association with relevant communities. Furthermore, the institutions caring for our culture, need a vision that is shared with social, economic and political partners.

## APPENDIX 2: PROJECT PLAN

### GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION & NETWORK SUPPORT

	2009				2010				2011			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>National &amp; interstate offices</b>												
Contributions and liaison												
<b>Strategic plan</b>												
Complete 2009-2011												
Prepare 2011-2113												
<b>Branch committee</b>												
Elections 2009												
Elections 2011												
Meeting management												
<b>Executive officer</b>												
Renew contract 2011-2012												
<b>Research</b>												
Marketing plan												
Branch history												
<b>Branch facilities</b>												
Renew contract with PHM												
<b>Finance</b>												
Streamline reporting and auditing												
Budget 2009												
Budget 2010												
Budget 2011												
Reports & Audits 2008												
Reports & Audits 2009												
Reports & Audits 2010												
<b>Policies &amp; procedures</b>												
By-laws												
Office manual												
<b>Records management</b>												
Phase 1												
Phase 2												
Phase 3												
<b>Chapters</b>												
<b>Annual reps meeting</b>												
Meeting 2009												
Meeting 2010												
Meeting 2011												
<b>Other support</b>												
Chapter plan												
Chapter support												
Chapter visits												
SH/I chapter profile												
Other chapter profiles												
<b>Other administrative tasks</b>												

## SERVICES & PRODUCTS

	2009				2010				2011			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Enquiries</b>												
Phone & telephone enquiries												
<b>Publications</b>												
<b>Museum Matters</b>												
Publish 2 issues a year												
Proposal on future issues												
<b>Museum Methods</b>												
Proposal												
<b>Other publications</b>												
Proposals												
<b>Website &amp; Communications</b>												
Review												
Maintain content												
<b>Events</b>												
<b>National conference</b>												
<b>Sydney tours and talks</b>												
<b>History week event</b>												
2009												
2010												
2011												
<b>Regional events</b>												
<b>Exhibitions</b>												
<b>Awards</b>												
<b>IMAGinE awards</b>												
<b>ABC/MA awards</b>												

## PROMOTION, ADVOCACY, RELATIONSHIPS

	2009				2010				2011			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Advocacy plan</b>												
<b>Committees &amp; liaison</b>												
MGNSW												
Other												
<b>Submissions</b>												
Arts NSW												
Other submissions												

## CODES

Involves routine ongoing tasks	
Requires dedicated effort	
Requires significant effort	
Dependent on requests	