

Cultural Ministers Council Communique

The 16th meeting of the Cultural Ministers Council (CMC) was held in Hobart today, Friday 28 March 2003, in conjunction with the opening of the "Ten Days on the Island" festival.

The meeting was chaired by the Hon Jim Bacon MHA, Premier of Tasmania, Minister for the Arts and Minister for Tourism, Parks and Heritage. Other Ministers attending included:

- Senator the Hon Rod Kemp, Minister for the Arts and Sport (Commonwealth);
- The Hon Mary Delahunty MLA, Minister for Planning, Arts and Women's Affairs (Victoria);
- The Hon Matt Foley MP, Minister for Employment, Training and Youth and Minister for the Arts (Queensland);
- The Hon Mike Rann MP, Premier and Minister for the Arts (South Australia);
- The Hon Sheila McHale MLA, Minister for Community Development, Disability Services, and Culture and the Arts (Western Australia);
- The Hon Clare Martin MLA, Chief Minister and Minister for Arts and Museums (Northern Territory);
- Mr Bill Wood MLA, Minister for Arts and Heritage (Australian Capital Territory);
- The Hon David Buffett, Minister for Community Services and Tourism (Norfolk Island); and
- The Hon Judith Tizard MP, Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, representing the Right Hon Helen Clark MP, Prime Minister and Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage (New Zealand).

Councillor Mike Montgomery attended representing the Australian Local Government Association.

Meeting Summary

Ministers welcomed the opportunity to discuss a range of key arts and heritage collections matters, and reaffirmed the importance of the arts and collections sectors to our cultural life.

The decisions taken by Ministers will see significant progress on a range of strategic issues of importance to the cultural sector. These agreements are detailed below.

Report of the Contemporary Visual Arts and Craft Inquiry

The Commonwealth, States and Territories have considered the recommendations in the *Report of the Visual Arts and Craft Inquiry* for enhanced and strategically-focused public funding, complemented by legislative and fiscal interventions. These recommendations aim to increase the viability and vitality of the contemporary visual arts and craft sector and the estimated 20000 individual artists who make up the sector. Towards this, Commonwealth, State and Territory governments:

- congratulate and thank Mr Rupert Myer for his report on the contemporary visual arts and craft sector;
- unanimously support the findings of the report;
- recognise the need to give priority to the role played by Indigenous Art and Craft Centres in this sector, through further research and support;
- subject to budget processes, agree to set in place a new cooperative framework for future funding arrangements;
- will contribute, subject to Budget processes, funding to progress the report's recommendations;
- agree to structure financial support to maximise effectiveness and afford scope for respective priorities to be accommodated;
- note that the Commonwealth will closely examine recommendations in the report relating to taxation, superannuation, copyright protection and resale royalties for artists;
- agree for officials to meet in June 2003 to discuss financial commitments to this package; and
- recommend an implementation group, chaired by the Commonwealth, comprising representatives of the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, be established to oversee the implementation of specific Commonwealth, State and Territory agreements and report back to the CMC.

Implementation of recommendations of the major performing arts inquiry

Ministers received a report on the implementation of agreed recommendations of the Major Performing Arts Inquiry (MPAI). They noted that the MPAI Implementation Reference Committee, to be continued for another year, is a valuable vehicle for communication between the companies and the State and Commonwealth funding agencies.

The Ministers were pleased to note that the arrangements adopted by CMC in August 2000 for implementing the MPAI's agreed recommendations were working well, with the companies recording a significant improvement in their financial and artistic results in 2001, as well as increased access to their productions (Queensland dissented from the proposition that MPAI resulted in increased access). Together the companies reported a \$4.456 million surplus in 2001, with overall earned income rising by seven per cent. In addition, the numbers of Australian works performed and paid attendances in 2001 had increased over 2000 results.

Ministers noted the considerable progress in implementing recommendations:

- halfway through the implementation period, 65 of the 89 recommendations accepted by Ministers have been implemented;

- the relationship between the funding agencies continues to be positive; and
- the Reserves Incentives Scheme has been finalised.

Ministers noted that two further exercises are in progress:

- the Review of the Funding Model for Major Performing Arts Companies; and
- the work of the Orchestral Taskforce--established by the orchestras themselves; and
- that the Commonwealth will consider a further review into orchestras once these exercises have reported. The Commonwealth will consult with all States and Territories on any review.

Public Art in Australia, Future Directions

Ministers discussed the current status of public art in Australia and agreed on the need for a more strategic approach to public art policy.

Ministers supported the proposal that Queensland would develop a Future Directions Paper on Public Art, to be considered at an appropriate future meeting of the CMC.

National Collections Advisory Forum

Ministers noted the considerable work already undertaken by the National Collections Advisory Forum in addressing its Terms of Reference. The Forum has an ambitious brief and has been working with all sectors of the industry to identify strategies addressing their key needs.

Ministers agreed to a strategic work program for the Forum focusing on support for volunteers and regional collections, and the development of a national collections strategy. Testing the feasibility of establishing a body to represent the shared interests of the collections sector remains a key priority for the Forum, which will convene a national industry meeting on 9 April 2003 to progress this issue.

Ministers also agreed to the appointment of Mr Ron Radford, Director of the Art Gallery of South Australia, as a member of the Forum.

Council of Australian Government Framework to Advance Reconciliation

Consistent with previous CMC discussions on ways it can further advance reconciliation within the cultural sector, Ministers considered an implementation strategy and budget proposals for the development of collaborative strategies on Indigenous Intellectual Property (IIP) issues.

Ministers agreed the key objectives for CMC in terms of IIP should be:

- promoting greater links between business and Indigenous communities about IIP to enhance greater economic independence;
- raising awareness in Indigenous communities, consumers and commercial operators of the need to protect IIP; and
- enhancing coordination of existing networks of Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations working in the area of IIP.

The Ministers congratulated New Zealand for its international leadership in developing the toi iho (Maori Made) trademark to protect the authenticity and quality of Maori arts and crafts,

and recognises the strong commitment of New Zealand to protect the cultural expression of traditional knowledge and to maintain the culture of Maori.

Redevelopment of Australian Museums and Galleries Online (AMOL)

Ministers asked CMC Standing Committee to convene a small working group to consider the policy and technology issues associated with the redevelopment of the Australian Museums and Galleries On-Line (AMOL) website that have arisen in recent consultations with the States and Territories and the various industry bodies.

The meeting asked the working group to report back to CMC out-of-session with the final revised proposal for the way forward within the next two to three months.

Cultural Statistics

Ministers noted progress in implementing the CMC Statistics Working Group's (SWG) program in 2002-03--including projects of importance to the cultural sector undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics.

Ministers approved the CMC SWG's program of activities for 2003-04. This will provide support for the ABS's program of cultural statistics activities, including the following priority projects:

- further work on Valuing of Indigenous Cultural Product, building on 2002-03 work by developing a methodology for a representative sample survey to estimate the value of retail sales of Indigenous visual art and craft;
- further work on Measuring the Impact of Cultural Tourism on Regions;
- continuation of the current program of SWG education seminars in 2002-03 to ensure all States and Territories are visited;
- further development of an Inventory of non-ABS culture-related data sources; and
- scoping a project to establish a statistical framework for a Contemporary Music Program Research Project.

Ministers noted that the 2003-04 program will also improve the focus of SWG activities, increase SWG's client focus and scope new issues identified as priority areas.

Ministers also agreed to the continuation of triennial funding arrangements for SWG for the years 2003-04 to 2005-06.

Implementation of the Report to Ministers on the Small-to-Medium Performing Arts Sector

At the May 2002 CMC meeting, Ministers agreed on the elements of a strategy to enhance the sustainability of the small-to-medium performing arts sector in both creative and financial terms.

Ministers noted that considerable progress had been made by the CMC Working Party in addressing the strategy during 2002-03. The strategy has been agreed by all State/Territory arts funding agencies and the Australia Council and will be progressively implemented during 2003-04. Key features of the strategy include:

- Improved coordination of State, Territory and Commonwealth funding arrangements for organisations in receipt of multi-year funding.

Ministers noted that, following analysis by the Australia Council of current practices and the potential for minimising reporting, the funding agencies agreed to adopt a standard set of minimum information requirements for small to medium companies in receipt of multi-year funding. These are based on an agreed framework for business plans and the use of the Corporations Act requirements for annual reports and financial reporting.

Ministers noted that the coordination of applications and reporting systems will assist in clarifying State/Territory and Commonwealth expectations of the sector. This will achieve a better understanding between the sector and funding agencies in relation to the balance between creative risk taking and sustainability.

The Ministers welcomed and supported the Australia Council's implementation of a 'fair notice' protocol. The protocol will improve communications between funding agencies and companies and provide an opportunity for companies to formally address issues of concern.

Better Coordination and Communication to Support National and International Touring

Ministers acknowledged that considerable Government support was already available for international touring, both nationally and within States and Territories. However the Ministers also noted that communication and coordination of international activity could be improved with the development of an online service.

With initial investment from the Australia International Cultural Council, the Australia Council has scoped and developed an interactive online service for the international promotion of Australian arts and cultural activities. The service aims to present information on contemporary Australian arts and culture events and activities overseas, build the international profile of Australian contemporary arts and culture and promote contemporary Australian arts and cultural product available for export and international presentation.

The service is expected to be available online in the second half of 2003.

The Provision of Targeted Advice and Expertise

The provision of targeted advice and expertise to address companies encountering financial stress and provision of strategic assistance for small-to-medium companies.

Ministers noted new initiatives at the national and State/Territory level to support the sector in the areas of business planning, improvement of financial systems and governance.

Delivery of National Training Development Programs for Small-to-Medium Companies

Ministers noted that the national training development program would commence in April/May 2003, and would be managed by the Australia Council. It will focus on strategic business planning and the development of advanced financial systems as a first priority.

Ministers commended the actions taken by the Working Group, toward the provision of an ongoing framework for this sector, in progressing these initiatives, and requested that a further report be provided at the next CMC meeting.

Return of Indigenous Cultural Property (RICP) Program

Ministers endorsed the RICP Program in February 1998 to assist with the repatriation of ancestral remains and secret sacred objects. Ministers considered a report on the status of the program, including the outcomes of the first funding round. Ministers noted the progress made under this important program and the significant level of community consultation.

Ministers also recognised the need to develop a timetable reflecting the needs and resources of communities, and agreed to extend the program to December 2005.

Promoting the Value of Arts—Branding the Arts Strategy/Business Plan

Ministers noted a presentation from the Australia Council on its development of a framework for a national *Branding the Arts Campaign*. The campaign is designed to encourage more Australians to appreciate their own creativity and that of others, and to increase engagement with and participation in the arts.

Ministers agreed that the Australia Council would make a presentation to the CMC Standing Committee in the second half of 2003 on the Branding the Arts Business Plan.

Multicultural Arts Report

Ministers noted a report on the implementation of the Australia Council's Arts in a Multicultural Australia Policy and areas of potential collaboration between the State, Territory and Commonwealth arts agencies.

The Ministers noted that the Australia Council will work with the State, Territory and Commonwealth agencies to develop multicultural arts initiatives.

Arts and Education

In August 2000, the Ministers noted the need for all governments to be proactive in strengthening the relationship between education and the arts.

Ministers noted progress on a Commonwealth project to evaluate a number of arts and education initiatives currently being undertaken by the Australian Council for Educational Research.

Proposed Australia-US Free Trade Agreement—Cultural Implications

Ministers noted the local content issues in relation to media, culture and broadcasting raised by the proposed Australia-US free trade agreement.

The State and Territory members of CMC urged the Commonwealth to protect existing local content rules for media, culture and broadcasting. The meeting noted that the Commonwealth Minister for Trade has written to Premiers and Chief Ministers seeking submissions in relation to trade negotiations.

Public Liability Insurance

Ministers agreed that:

- each jurisdiction examine the impact of current public liability insurance reforms on arts organisations and practitioners, in particular:
 - the cost of insurance premiums;

- the ability of organisations and individuals to obtain insurance cover;
- other outstanding issues.
- Ministers will report back to CMC out-of-session and where appropriate, raise issues with Treasury ministers.

Eureka 150th Celebrations

The Ministers noted the 150th anniversary of the Eureka Stockade in December 2004 and agreed to advise their interest in participating in a program of events commemorating and celebrating the anniversary.

Next Meeting

Ministers expressed their appreciation to the Chair for Tasmania's hospitality in hosting the meeting. Ministers agreed that the next meeting of CMC will be hosted by Western Australia, in February 2004, in conjunction with the Perth International Arts Festival.

28 March 2003