

Cultural Ministers Council Communique

The 20th meeting of the Cultural Ministers Council (CMC) was held in Canberra today, Friday 29 February 2008.

Hosting and chairing the meeting:

Australian Capital Territory - Mr Jon Stanhope MLA, Chief Minister, Minister for the Arts

Australian governments were represented by:

Australian Government - The Hon Peter Garrett, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

Victoria - Mr Rob Hudson, Parliamentary Secretary for the Arts

Queensland - The Hon Rod Welford MP, Minister for the Arts

Western Australia - The Hon Sheila McHale MLA, Minister for Culture and the Arts

Tasmania - The Hon Michelle O'Byrne MHA, Minister for Environment, Parks, Heritage and the Arts

Other governments were represented by:

New Zealand - The Hon Judith Tizard, Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage

Norfolk Island - The Hon Andre Nobbs MLA, Chief Minister

The following representatives of Australian Ministers attended:

New South Wales - Mr Peter Loxton, Acting Director-General, Department of the Arts, Sport and Recreation, representing The Hon Frank Sartor MP, Minister for the Arts

South Australia - Mr Greg Mackie OAM, Executive Director, Arts SA, representing The Hon Mike Rann MP, Premier and Minister for the Arts

Northern Territory - Mr Len Kiely MLA, Minister for Natural Resources, Environment and Heritage, representing Ms Marion Scrymgour MLA, Minister for Arts and Museums

Councillor Dick Gross, President of the Municipal Association of Victoria attended representing the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).

Meeting Summary

The Ministers welcomed the historic opportunity for cooperation and collaboration presented by this CMC meeting, the first since the formation of the new Australian Government. Ministers also discussed:

- the strengthening of cooperation across all levels of government to create an environment which encourages the growth of a vibrant and strong Australian cultural life;
- developments to support Indigenous arts and culture; and
- opportunities to collaborate on improving the delivery of arts education.

Ministers also agreed to develop a National Arts and Disability Strategy to ensure that all Australians are given the opportunity to engage fully in the arts and cultural activities.

Ministers committed to a range of collaborative initiatives in support of the development of contemporary music, including Indigenous contemporary music, the creative innovation economy and cultural indicators to assist policy development.

At the meeting Australian Government Minister for the Environment, Heritage, Water and the Arts, Peter Garrett outlined his vision for a dynamic and collaborative approach to support for the arts. The Minister noted the intrinsic, social and economic contribution of the arts to Australian society.

The outcomes of the Ministers' discussions are outlined below.

Indigenous Arts and Culture

Ministers were updated on activities and priorities across governments in relation to Indigenous arts and culture and on potential areas of cooperation. Ministers affirmed their commitment to supporting Indigenous arts as an expression of a dynamic and living culture, and acknowledged the role the arts play in enhancing economic and social outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

Ministers noted developments in the Australian Government's support for Indigenous arts and culture. These include commitments to additional funding for the National Arts and Crafts Industry Support program and the introduction of triennial funding for art centres. Ministers also noted additional Australian Government support for Indigenous artists through a resale royalty scheme and the development of an industry-wide code of conduct to protect artists from unscrupulous conduct and enhance the industry's sustainability.

Ministers noted the importance of building a sustainable Indigenous arts industry recognising the fundamental cultural, social and the economic contribution of Indigenous arts to Australia. Activities in support of Indigenous arts and culture in other jurisdictions were also noted, as was ongoing collaboration between the Australian Government and state/territory governments on the Return of Indigenous Cultural Property program and the Indigenous Intellectual Property Toolkit. Ministers were provided with, and noted, an update on the achievements of the Return of Indigenous Cultural Property program.

Ministers agreed to prioritise the development of a strategy for Indigenous contemporary music. A CMC working group will coordinate a comprehensive overview of existing state/territory and Australian Government activity in this area and will develop a draft action plan for consideration at the next meeting of the CMC, based on the information gathered in this overview.

Ministers also agreed to work together to build further support for the Indigenous visual arts sector. Avenues for cooperation and further development of the Indigenous visual arts industry will be explored jointly by the Australian Government and each state and territory government. The Australian Government agreed to report on progress on supporting Indigenous arts at the next CMC meeting.

Education and the Arts

Ministers noted the Australian Government's commitment to working collaboratively with the states and territories, and the arts and education sectors, to achieve a commitment to enhanced delivery of arts education, with music as an initial focus. Ministers agreed to the establishment of a Joint Implementation Group to develop an arts education workplan for consideration at the next CMC meeting in October 2008.

Ministers provided in-principle agreement for the development of an arts education workplan. Building on existing initiatives, the workplan will include action in response to the *National Education and the Arts Statement*, *National Review of School Music Education* and *National Review of Visual Education* and the development of cooperative programs to meet areas of need in schools and universities. Ministers recommend the inclusion of the arts as a key learning area in the national curriculum which is being developed.

Ministers agreed to initiate action to increase access to school music education, with an initial focus on primary schools which have no music programs. This will be achieved through working with the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs and the

Music Education Advisory Group to encourage the improved provision of music education in schools and the enhancement of artist- in-residence programs to cover identified gaps in existing programs.

Contemporary Music Development

Ministers agreed to pursue activities to promote greater access to live Australian music. They noted the progress of the Contemporary Music Development working group in implementing the CMC's priorities for contemporary music, including the development of a business skills training project for music managers which is to be delivered in 2008. The CMC set up the Contemporary Music Development working group at its 2006 meeting.

Ministers identified a number of key opportunities for collaboration between governments, including but not limited to developing export markets, reducing barriers to live performance and supporting Indigenous contemporary music, as outlined above. The CMC expanded the working group's role to include active, collaborative engagement with these issues. Ministers agreed to promote, in collaboration with local government, cooperation on possible legislative or regulatory action to reduce barriers to live music performance and to encourage the growth of live music precincts by working with colleagues who have licensing and planning responsibilities for these areas.

Strengthening the Creative Innovation Economy

Ministers endorsed the findings of the report *Building a Creative Innovation Economy*, a high-level summary of issues intended to inform the planning of programs and activities across jurisdictions. They agreed to publicly release the report and to invite public comment on the report via the CMC website.

The report was prepared by the Creative Innovation Economy Roundtable, which the CMC established at its 2006 meeting, and which drew together senior government officials from operational levels across diverse industry development, technology infrastructure, film and cultural policy areas. The report recognises the achievements and ongoing work of the creative sector and outlines key issues, opportunities, shared priorities and potential future directions for the sector in the ever-expanding online, mobile and broadcast digital environment.

Ministers agreed to the public release of a ministerial statement outlining their commitment to pursue a range of practical measures to strengthen the creative innovation economy in their jurisdictions. The statement includes the Ministers' commitment to champion the central role of creativity, the cultural sector and the creative industries as drivers of innovation and growth in the broader economy. The Australian Government agreed to report to the next CMC meeting on its progress in developing a strategy for supporting Australia's creative industries in the digital environment.

Arts and Disability

Ministers recognised the importance of facilitating access to and enjoyment of the arts for all Australians, no matter where they live or what their circumstances. Ministers agreed to establish a CMC Working Group, chaired by the Australian Government and including the Australia Council, to coordinate discussions with all jurisdictions and the arts and disability sector on the development of a National Arts and Disability Strategy. Preparatory work for the strategy will include an audit of current arts and disability policy and programs across all jurisdictions. Ministers agreed to develop a targeted and practical strategy which, for the first time, will set out a national framework to improve coordination and collaboration across

governments to ensure that all Australians with a disability are given the opportunity to engage fully in the arts and cultural activity.

Ministers agreed to work with state disability Ministers and to consider a draft National Arts and Disability Strategy, prepared by the CMC Working Group, at the next meeting of the CMC.

National Cultural Strategy

Ministers supported the Framework for National Cooperation in the Arts and Culture and resolved to develop a National Cultural Strategy. They affirmed the value of the Framework in identifying collaborative opportunities under the CMC Forward Work Plan. The Ministers directed the CMC Standing Committee to further refine the range of opportunities for collaboration, including with local government, and to report back to the next CMC meeting.

Collections Council of Australia

Ministers noted the activity to date of the Collections Council of Australia (CCA) and the result of the recently conducted review of the CCA, which concluded that, with the current level of resourcing the CCA has made significant progress in the short period since its establishment.

Statistics and Cultural Indicators Working Groups

Ministers noted the 2007–08 Statistics Working Group budget and work program, and agreed to the public release of the group's statistical brochure *Arts and Culture in Australian Life*. The brochure highlights the increasing importance of arts and culture to Australians:

- A growing number of Australians are finding cultural employment and work opportunities, with 3.5 million people working in the culture and leisure sector;
- Each year, 85 per cent of Australians attend at least one cultural venue or event; and
- Australian governments spent \$5.5 billion on arts and culture in the last financial year.

Ministers noted the progress made by the Cultural Indicators Working Group, established at the 2006 CMC meeting, towards identifying a suite of high level cultural indicators.

Next Meeting

Ministers expressed their appreciation to the Australian Capital Territory for hosting and chairing the meeting. Ministers agreed that the next meeting of the Cultural Ministers Council will be chaired and hosted by the Northern Territory Government in October 2008.

29 February 2008